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THE BOOK OF LOVE

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BY

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"The Son of Mary Bethel"*



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I

THE GARDEN OF ROSE AND RUE

A QUATRAIN SEQUENCE

*When I am dead and sister to the dust;
When no more avidly I drink the wine
Of human love; when the pale Proserpine
Has covered me with poppies, and cold rust
Has cut my lyre-strings, and the sun has thrust
Me underground to nourish the world-vine,
Men shall discover these old songs of mine,
And say: This woman lived — as poets must!*

*This woman lived and wore life as a sword
To conquer wisdom; this dead woman read
In the sealed Book of Love and underscored
The meanings. Then the sails of faith she spread,
And faring out for regions unexplored,
Went singing down the River of the Dead.*

THE GARDEN OF ROSE AND RUE

I

THE ROSE

WHEN I entreated Life to make me wise,
It drew aside Love's brodered veil of lies;
And perilous Beauty, undivined before,
Beckoned me from the mazes of his eyes.

I do not care for gold, it is too cheap;
Nor fame, whose field oblivion shall reap.
But I would sing, and linger in the sun,
And love — as only poets can — and sleep.

The poorest lives some little blossoms bring
To deck Love's altar in the days of spring.
Save for the perfume of their vernal bloom,
The pain of birth would seem too stern a thing.

Only the poet looks Love in the eyes:
He knows the meaning of the mystic sighs,
The rapturous tears, the pain, the mad desire
That starves upon the lips it satisfies.

And after all our toils and dreams and prayers,
'Tis only Love for which the future cares;
Labour and fame are steps along Love's way,
And art is but the garment that he wears.

Love, let us steal away into the night —
Into the luring wonder of the night.

Impassioned earth breathes through the lonely grove
The cool delirious fragrance of the night.

Yea, thou didst make me captive with a glance —
An arrow shot across the gulfs of chance;

Its gleam appeared to my enchanted eyes
The light of immemorial romance.

Thy body is a living shrine for me,
Thy deep embrace the bread and wine for me;

Thy fervid kisses are the prayers of faith,
Thine eyes the altar lights that shine for me.

The moon sheds no such glamour anywhere
As on the nimbus of thy mystic hair;

Each separate thread is an aspiring ray —
An emanation luminous with prayer.

Time's hidden ways thine eyes reveal to me:
Deep in their vision broods the memory

Of all the myriad lives thy soul has known,
Thou passionate pilgrim of eternity!

Thy voice is thrilling with an overtone
That haunts the memory, like a whisper blown

Upon the wind from somewhere in the dark:
Maybe some ancient world our sires have known.

There is a sweeter sound than seraph hears:
The rhythm that moves the ever-pulsing years
Holds less of lure and wonder to the soul —
The music of thy heart-beats to my ears.

Thy breath is like the breath of orient nights,
Whose brooding glamour fragrantly invites
The fainting fancy to a couch where wait
The trembling dreams of wild, mysterious rites.

I touch the breathing marvel of thy flesh,
Like throbbing rose-leaves, and as dewy-fresh.
How sprang this blossom from the common soil —
World dust, that holds thy spirit in its mesh?

The immortal Breath blows o'er us where we lie
Beneath the star-leaved branches of the sky,
Whispering a cosmic benedicite —
O listen, Love, before the Word goes by!

The lure of suns is but the lure of Love,
Their all-creative warmth — the warmth of Love;
And symbol of the passion of the cross —
The shadowy rood upon the breast of Love.

In these unquenchable desires we feel
The thirsty future's dominant appeal;
And through the fire of our impassioned dust
A thousand ancestors their loves reveal.

There is a dream that often comes to me
In the grey dawn, and eyes me wistfully;
'Tis little as the child in Mary's arms
And all as lovely — and it looks like thee!

Lest Love should grow too earthly to aspire,
The wise gods blinded him with vague desire;

They nourished him on dreams and ecstasies,
Tempered his arrows in the sacred fire.

They say thou art an idler, lover mine,
Drunken with fancies, poetry and wine.

What cares the nightingale for envious crows?
Thy very faults are lovely — being thine.

For me the cosmic æons lie complete,
O Love, between thy forehead and thy feet!

Here the untrammelled hours of day and night —
Here dust and soul inalienably meet.

My spirit is an emanated flame
That burns the rose-leaves of its earthly frame,—

Too vision-rapt to heed the rose's tears,
Unmindful of her glory or her shame.

Thy love is like deep waters all around —

Warm pulsing waters, in whose brooding sound

The lone wail of my heart is lulled with dreams,
And the far clamour of the world is drowned.

Why do the vine and oak together dwell?
Why does the sun the listening stars compel?
Why does the moon allure the sighing sea?
I am so wise with love that I could tell.

O Lover mine, I pray thee, do not weep!
The very earth is damp with tears — grave-deep:
Without thy bitter tribute, the brave sun
Can never dry them ere Time calls to sleep.

The joy of Love is better than Love's tears,
So kiss me and forget thy foolish fears.
Soon, soon the clammy dark lips of the grave
In one cold kiss will hold us years on years!

How swift the merry sand runs in the glass!
The midnight daughters glide along the grass,
Veiling their faces in their purple hair.
Draw nearer — this enchanted hour will pass.

The stars have chosen thee to be my king,
To tune my lyre of life and make me sing;
The pressure of thy rose-leaf lips on mine
Is more inspiring than the breath of Spring.

I am the sun that warms thee with its heat,
I am the dream that makes thy slumber sweet,
I am the moon that watches thee all night,
I am the sandals underneath thy feet.

Draw close the mystic curtain of Love's bed:
Here the dim Future and the Past are wed,
And brooding Isis veils her mysteries —
To whelm the world when thou and I are dead.

In my life's soil thy life is planted deep,
Never to be uprooted; and I keep
The lyric seeds thy love has sown in me
For a rare harvest all the world shall reap.

Thou art the dream between Love's day and night.
In thy strange being Love's extremes unite:
The trance-like prayer that purifies the soul,
The throbbing senses in their fierce delight.

Thy dear white feet are moistened with my tears.
Oh, what rose-shrouded thorns, what spectral fears
Lurk for their toilsome passing in the dark
Along the tragic pathway of the years!

The lily petals of thy hand are light
As vagrant dreams. I feel them in the night —
Soft as the lotus of some lunar lake
That drowns on the waves in vague delight.

Love dreams and murmurs something in his sleep.
With what strange secret do I vigil keep?
Maybe some slumbering passion of dead days!
I veil my face in Love's long hair and weep.

Love wakes and leans above me in the dark,
Half dazed with dreams that thrill the teeming dark;
His warm soft lips feel blindly for my lips
In the delirious wonder of the dark.

O Love ineffable! When fused we lie,
Life piercing life, through flesh and breath and eye,
I know not if this fiery luminous form —
This river of lyric flame be thou or I!

The muses whisper to me from thy hair;
Thy languorous look is perfume on the air,
Thy breath a bridal veil that covers me,
Thy touch a wild insatiable prayer.

I lay my spirit in thine open hands;
Between thy fingers the ecstatic sands
Of my life tremble. This unearthly dream
Only the poet ever understands!

The birds are singing, and my lover sleeps.
The rosy light of morning slowly creeps
Over the moveless beauty of his face:
Who knows this hour knows Love's sublimest deeps.

So still is Love he hears the farthest sound:
The footfall of the seasons in their round,
The soft etheric swish of the rushing spheres,
The murmur of the mute things underground.

II

THE RUE

The night I learned that Love was false to me,
Beside my bed the stars watched pitilessly,—

Old midwives, muttering at each moan of pain:
“The birth-pangs of a soul are good to see!”

O little hour of Love, so wild and sweet!
I gave the world, thy honey-dew to eat;
And now the tear-sown pathway of the dead
Echoes the patter of thy flying feet.

I can no longer bear thy burning eyes —
They brand me, blind me; and thy smothered sighs
Of passion are as poison to my soul,
That drinks its fill of death with avid cries.

O Love, my Love, thou art so bitter-sweet!
I would that from thy forehead to thy feet
Thou wert some deadly flower, that I might pluck
And crush thy petals for my soul to eat.

Sometimes I love thee so I wish thee dead.
I would devour thy being as my bread;
Would drain thy hidden veins dry, as of wine,
Red drop by drop, for all my heart has bled!

Oh! I have bought in lonely, endless nights
My fill of thee who art all strange delights —

The thrill of roses, and the viol's cry,
The pang of the earth-passion's awful rites.

And I am jealous of the very light
That bares thy beauty from the veil of night:
Deep in the dungeon of my sombre soul
Thy body I would bury out of sight.

Oh, kill me with thy kisses! Drain me dry
Of pain and life, nor leave me breath to sigh;
Yea, feed my spirit, starving at thy lips,
Thy sweet perfidious poison ere I die!

Bury me deep beyond all isolate pains
In the dim shadows of thy thralling veins;
That nevermore may there be sound of me,
Or colour of me in all the earth contains.

I then shall have no being save in thine:
My love shall mingle with thy blood as wine
Mingles with water, and thy wanton soul
Shall never know a life apart from mine.

Give me to drink the poison of thy breast —
Dark cruel wine from grapes of passion pressed —
Till I am drunk beyond delirium's dream
In that dim utter deep where men may rest.

There is a crevice in Love's garden wall
Where mandrakes thrive, with lilies rank and tall;
Where stealthy Death peers through a purple veil
In madmen's eyes, and strange worms crawl and crawl.

I gave my lover tears and sacrifice,
My soul's white prayer, my dreams of paradise,
The vision of my guardian angel's face:
He laughed and turned away his weary eyes.

I gave my lover kisses bitter-sweet,
Strange deadly blossoms for his soul's defeat,
The purple paths of hell I lured him on:
His lips burn fiercely on my tear-stained feet.

The thorny rose of Love has one last sting
Tipped with a poison strange and maddening.
Who grasps it close shuns not the touch of Death:
To love and loathe the self-same lovely thing.

My lover whispers lies into my ear;
My listening soul laughs silently to hear,—
The still, ironic laughter of the tomb,
Of merry skulls that grin from ear to ear.

She wore a lily in her golden hair —
That Azra — on the day Love found her fair.
Oh! I shall dread the lilies till I die,
And tremble at their perfume on the air.

I hang upon Love's shoulder worship-wise,
Lost in the dreamy glamour of his eyes;
With far-off meditative gaze he asks —
If I have seen how blue are Azra's eyes!

I lie alone under the mocking sky.
The midnight hours indifferently walk by.
O wanton Moon! You turn your back on me,
To gaze and smile where Love and Azra lie!

For we must laugh if we would hold our place
In Nature's pitiless, capricious grace.

He who desires to dally with the moon
Must never come with tears upon his face.

No desert waste is lonelier than I.
The arid pain of Love has burned me dry.
But passion's prayers turn backward on my lips —
I will not be Love's beggar though I die!

My false Love may seek pleasure where he will,
While I my separate destiny fulfil —
Grinding my soul against the adamant
Of self, whose dust obscures my vision still.

But of this Azra nothing shall remain
More than of last year's lilies or its rain,
Except her strange name echoing through my song —
Immortal with the laurels of my pain.

My lover left me — and I shed no tears!
Across the world I wonder if he hears
The laughter of my soul at her own grief,
Low pallid laughter — sadder than all tears!

We have a bitter power who laugh at pain,
Who laugh and laugh — for tears are shed in vain.

They weary lovers and amuse the gods:
O tender thought to soothe the reeling brain!

I felt thine essence quivering like wine
Through all my veins, that leaped to answer thine —

Our spirits fusing in a flash of flame —
The day I bought thy soul and blood with mine.

When thou art false, my Love, I know full well
There is no truth — this side the gate of hell,

No little lily soul unstained by lies,
No sphere of beauty not an empty shell.

Is there no anodyne despair may buy,
No draught of dreamless sleep for such as I?

Discordant singer in the choir of Love,
Who neither cares to live nor dares to die.

How many minutes are there in a day?
Love's restless watchers know, and only they:

The clock ticks, and the quivering nerves are strained
For sound of steps — that never come their way.

If women really die and burn in hell,
They do not burn with fire — the prophet's hell.

No! But they wait, and wait, and wait, and wait,
For one who never comes — the woman's hell.

Thy vacant room is an enchanted place;
Thy wraith pervades the air that I embrace;
The perfume of thy presence lingers still
About the pillow where I lay my face.

I touch thy garments lightly, half afraid,
So ghostly are they in the teeming shade.
The candle flickers, like a frightened soul,
Before the little altar where we prayed.

The stars are not so lonely as my heart!
Though I should scale the cruel cliffs of Art
And cut my name into their granite face —
Love's way and mine would lie as far apart.

The pain of Love has poisoned all the day.
Pitiless Love, that lures but to betray!
And pitiless the whisper of the soul:
Like songs and worlds, this too shall pass away.

Life plays us mortals many a strange jest:
Dead leaves and grave-dew crown our aching quest,
And when Love comes to cheer us by the way —
Always the one we love not, loves us best.

Only the Lord of Change has endless sway.
The vanished Love of our dead yesterday
Now wanders wailing down the woods of dream,
And mocking shadows beckon where we lay.

The world's poor travesty of Love stalks by,
Linked arm in arm with Death — a smiling lie!

Its empty words and empty laughter bring
The tears of pity to the lover's eye.

Deep Love is slow of speech and void of art;
Silence and timid tears reveal his heart.

But shallow Love is ever eloquent
To mouth his meagre passion — and depart.

Ye who would know how sweet a thing is Love,
Go ask the souls outside the pale of Love —
The pallid priest, the love-mocked Magdalen —
They also know how bitter a thing is Love.

O silent watcher of the mystic fire!
When to your hidden temple I retire
To still my soul, between your eyes and mine
Falls like a veil the shadow of Desire.

And oh, the pity of that piercing, vain
Delight, that fills again and yet again
The hollow world with little yearning souls —
Swelling the awful sum of mortal pain!

Pale passion and red hatred strove with me,
And dark pride strove, pain, and gaunt jealousy;
Strove till they all lay dead one stormy day.
My soul, surprised, awoke to find her free!

But I am weary and I long to sleep.
The hungry flame of Love has burned so deep
 Into the tender substance of my life,
I care no more either to laugh or weep.

How heavy is the earth's heart as it hears
Ever the dropping, dropping of Love's tears!
 Must not those bitter, murmuring waters drown
The choral harmonies of kindred spheres?

The cool white flower of peace must bloom for me
Somewhere between the mountain and the sea:
 The sea in whose wide bed I may not rest,
The mountain whose austerities I flee.

Oh, for the pure oblivion of sleep!
In those vast waters I would sink me deep
 Beyond where both desire and dream lie dead,
And passion and despair forget to weep.

Death hides no hell that could awake my fear,
For I have heard the sound that madmen hear,
 Heard the far wail of a crushed, tortured thing —
My own strayed soul, and seen it disappear!

Who dares to love unloved the cord unties
In whose close coils the fettered spirit lies;
 The jealous gods blush and evade his glance,
And joy and pain are equally his prize.

He loves me not, and all the world is grey.
But I am wiser now than yesterday!

If he had laid life's roses in my lap —
I never should have known the world was grey.

The sun has dried the tear-drops in my eyes,
The sturdy wind has blown away my sighs.

While the sun laughs, I am ashamed to weep;
And the wind is old and knows all sorrow dies.

Now will I sing my song, that not in vain
Shall be my passage through the fiery rain,—

A song of light, for the world's heart would break
If I should sing the story of my pain.

The distillation from Love's bleeding heart
Is the rose-attar of the lyric mart;

And Pain and Passion are the sentinels
That double-guard the jealous doors of Art.

Poor lover, writhing in the lonely night,
Thy vale of hell leads to a solemn height:

Who dares the fire, and gains the farther side,
Walks with the sons of God in the great light.

Ye who would know Love's highest reach of bliss —
The still, white peaks of peace — remember this:

Before a soul can face that steady light
It must have plumbed pain's nethermost abyss.

I sought my soul in joy — she was not there.
Vainly I sought her too in toil and prayer.

At last I found her with illumined eyes
Walking the rainbow of my Love's despair.

II

LYRICS AND SONNETS

THE BRIDE OF THE OVERMAN

OH, do not remember these womanly tears
That I shed on your wondering face!
They are drops from the wells of unspeakable fears
That lurk in the cavernous dusk of dead years
Awaiting a time and a place,—

Fears of old memories clamouring still
For a glance of my soul or a sign;
And they mock at the feeble and passionate will
That would render immortal the touch and the thrill
Of a man's clinging lips upon mine.

Swearing fidelity far beyond death,
The presumptuous children of clay
Would make love's ideal a loud shibboleth,
When everything under the law of the Breath
May claim but the hour and the day.

O lover as wise as the magi of old!
You have given me rapture more vast
Than God's dream of creation; and yet we are told
That the mightiest passion must some day lie cold
In the bottomless gulf of the past.

And our love — nay Belovèd, regard not the tears,
Or kiss them away if you will —
Our love shall be wide as the sweep of the spheres,
And free as the music the Overman hears
In his cave on the crown of the hill.

But sometimes, I know, at the terror night brings
In this land without pathway or mark,
I shall cling to your hand as a little child clings,
Lest your candle go out in the wind from God's wings,
And leave me alone with the shadowless things
In the emptiness under the dark.

I KNOW

OH! I know why the alder trees
Lean over the reflecting stream;
And I know what the wandering bees
Heard in the woods of dream.

I know how the uneasy tide
Answers the signal of the moon,
And why the morning-glories hide
Their eyes in the forenoon.

And I know all the wild delight
That quivers in the sea-bird's wings,
For in one little hour last night
Love told me all these things.

THE MESSENGER

O PALE pressed flower
That has crossed the world-wide sea
From my Orient-wandering Love
With words for me!

Frail messenger
Of a dream that does not die,
Though all the threads of life
Be drawn awry!

Your Asian stem
Drew from that storied earth
The essences that gave
The pale Christ birth.

Beauty and faith,
And a something all unknown,
On your sweet and subtle breath
To me are blown.

Give you, he says,
Soft kisses and send you back
To his tent where the world's way joins
The pilgrim's track.

O flower! tell him
These messages for me:
Tell him there lies the old haze
Over the sea.

Tell him the path
To the little house and lawn
Is overgrown with grass
Now he is gone.

Tell him the vine
On the arbour is bare of leaves;
Now it has nothing to hide
It pines and grieves.

Tell him the star
That recorded our bridal vow
In the book of the summer dark
Is shining now.

Tell him the crows
In the pine-tree still arise
To challenge the wraith of dawn
With warning cries.

Tell him the glass
That used to mirror the sea
And our twined forms now mirrors
Only the sea.

Give him these tears,
And tell him the golden heart
Of the rose of life grows grey
When lovers part.

OUT OF THE PAST

SOMEWHERE, Love, in the far-off, time-veiled days of
the great past,
Thou and I and the beautiful Love-god danced in the
sunshine.

Somewhere, too, as the night dew lay on the leaves of
the jungle,
Thou didst whisper me softly the unknown mystical
Word.

Under thy languorous eyelids, dark as the doors of the
future,
Strange dreams, wild dreams, beckon my rapt soul.
Oh, to allay my
Fever and longing there in the midnight pools of the
lotus,
Losing myself and the world in the brooding embrace
of thine eyes!

Thy dark hair is a veil of the Mystery. Under the
shadows —
Purple with Orient heat, deep sultriness — something
is hidden,
Something my lone soul needs. Though it yield to the
touch of my fingers,
Still it eludes my sight while maddening me to the
quest.

Thy touch, Love, is the sun's touch, pure as the breath
of the morning;
Thy touch, Love, is the bite of the fire — unassuagable
passion;
Under thy hand or thy hot lips — aye, in the cling of
thy garments —
Ecstasy waits, pain hides, power quivers to move me
to life.

Through thine eyes I am one with the deathless One of
the ages.
Thy strong hold is the life-hold, firm with the urge of
creation.
Under thy spell Time listens and stirs not; there the
immortal
Silence pauses to drink of the rushing river of joy.

Where did I lose thee? Where in the garden of devi-
ous byways,
Love, did we loosen our hands? Oh, hold me close and
forever!
So the celestial Gardener may not distinguish between
us,
So we appear to His eyes one rose on the tree of the
world.

MATE

THERE is a wistful prayer
That often comes to me,
And lays its face against my face
In utter ecstasy —
That all the lovers in the world
Might be as near as we!

THE SYMBOL

THY love is a symbol, a mystical sign
Of vast, unuttered things;
The bread and the sacramental wine
Of my faith I receive at Love's veiled shrine
In all thy ministerings.

Thy love is my dream in the mortal night,
A web by the earth-moth spun,
A veil for the unendurable Light;
It softens the blaze for my frail sight
Of the immanent unseen Sun.

Thy love is realisation's hour,
High noon on the disc of life;
The sands of its time are the sands of power
In the glass of Fate, round whose watch-tower
The cosmic winds are at strife.

Thy love is the promise of keener bliss
Than earth-dazed beings feel;
The rush of its blood is the flaming kiss
Of stars on the edge of the great abyss
Where form and spirit reel.

Thy love is a danger beyond all fear,
A rift in the fathomless void;
From its perilous deep strange faces peer,
And pale hands beckon to some far sphere
Where self shall be destroyed.

Thy love is the peace of eternity,
The rest that follows birth;
The fold of thine arms is the fold of the sea,
And they hold and soothe and cradle me
As the ocean holds the earth.

A MAIDEN

"GIVE me Love, O Life," I cried,
"Give me Love, though naught beside!
I would know the way he wanders,
For the world is wide."

Then I found him at my side,
For my prayer was not denied;
And the narrow world has nowhere
For my heart to hide!

A YEAR AGO

How strange it seems that one brief year ago
Indifferently I watched you passing by,
Nor dreamed that in your half-averted eye
Love's universe was mirrored! Even so
Bloom lilies by the stream whose overflow
Shall sweep them from their moorings, and untie
Their roots from the home soil. A bee may fly
To windward of a rose-bush and not know.

With all his hidden wisdom, Love is blind!
You were the messenger of Destiny
That paused before my dwelling undivined.
A year ago your spirit was for me
The pearl a diver risks his life to find —
And passes in the darkness of the sea.

HAUNTED

WHAT is that sound on the wind, my Love,
That little wail of fright?
Is it the cry of a lone lost dove
Somewhere up in the boughs above
Our window this wild night?

What is that shadow along the wall
That wavers and is still?
It is very faint and very small
To fill my soul with this weird appal,
This weight of unknown ill.

O Love, there are fingers upon my hair,
And yours are fast in mine!
Is it a breath of the midnight air
That blows on my forehead and lingers there?
Or is it a ghostly sign?

Gather me close in your strong arms, Dear,
And hold me tenderly;
For I dare not whisper the thing I fear,
Unless I feel you near — Oh, near —
To the throbbing heart of me!

It is not a shadow that wavers there,
Nor a dove that moans in pain,
Nor a breath of the night wind on my hair:
*'Tis the pilgrim Soul from the realm of air
That knocked at our door in vain!*

SONG OF KRISHNA

I AM all things, and I lie in thine arms!
Thou dost embrace in me Time and the measure of
Time,
The thrill of all joy, and the rush of the stars through
the outermost virginal void.

I am Love that binds, and I am the great Unbinder.
Life has no gifts that my hands do not scatter,
And darkness is the shadow of mine eyelids.

Beauty burns in her veil for the vision of those I embrace.

When I whisper to my Love in the stillness,
Somewhere on earth a musician hears divine harmony,
Somewhere a flower opens.

I will not leave thee, for without me there is nothing;
When thou feelest the touch of thy friend in the night-time, know I am there;
When in the rush of the great waters terror comes nigh thee, know I am there.

All lovers are only the promise of me,
And what are all lovers beside me?

YOU

THROUGH you the beauty of the world lies bare.

I feel the breeze like God's breath on my face
Whispering an unknown word — and everywhere
I see the vision of a love-lit face.

So strange it seems! A little while ago

I knew not any of these lovely things;
To all my dreams the demons answered no,
Darkening the daylight with their evil wings.

Tell me, Belovèd, for your words are wise,
How do you hold all beauty in your hand,
And all the host of heaven in your eyes,
And in your hours the moons of fairyland?

You pass my threshold, and the narrow room
Is peopled with the tenuous forms of air,
The barren boughs of faith are all abloom,
And I am mute with wonder and with prayer.

THE VERGE

OH, tell me, traveller, I pray,
Where my slain love lies dead!
My soul has wandered up and down,
By grief and terror led,
But found no token save the drops
Her own bruised feet have bled.

Along the cypress-shaded way
Strange shadows come and go;
The ghosts of all love's buried hours
Walk with me, pale and slow;
But I would rather go alone,
Because they beckon so.

Further I fare along the road;
But there is nothing here
Save empty spaces, and the glooms
Where grope weird shapes of fear —
The grim, mad phantoms of the mind
That stare and mock and leer.

Somewhere there is an awful place
Where all dead things lie cold;
Prayers, passions and forgotten tears,
Kisses, and lies long told,
Shame, soft caresses, sleep and faith,—
They all lie there and mould.

There love may lie. But my tired feet
Will never find the way.
They falter. The Lethean waves
Lap round them cold and grey.
In those dead waters let me rest
Until the Judgment Day!

SOMETIME

SOMETIME the Spring will come with softer green
Than ever dared to touch the world before;
Sometime the Guest my soul has never seen
Will pass the threshold of my waiting door.

Sometime the passion of my book of song
Will face me in the eyes of Destiny;
Sometime the Question I have asked so long
Of the slow stars, will turn and answer me.

A sail, now tossing on the sea of dreams,
Sometime will rest in the broad port of waking;
Sometime the Weaver, that now idle seems,
Will show some splendid fabric of her making.

There lies a light upon the peaks of faith
That makes my heart beat faster as I climb;
And wistfully before me floats a wraith —
The Presence that will walk with me sometime.

HE WHO KNOWS LOVE

HE who knows Love — becomes Love, and his eyes
Behold Love in the heart of everyone,
Even the loveless: as the light of the sun
Is one with all it touches. He is wise
With undivided wisdom, for he lies
In Wisdom's arms. His wanderings are done,
For he has found the Source whence all things run —
The guerdon of the quest, that satisfies.

He who knows Love becomes Love, and he knows
All beings are himself, twin-born of Love.
Melted in Love's own fire, his spirit flows
Into all earthly forms, below, above;
He is the breath and glamour of the rose,
He is the benediction of the dove.

LOVE'S PARADOX

THE tears of hopeless love are bitter-sweet;
Its cruel rocks that tear the lover's feet
To him are dearer than the flower-strewn ways —
The careless ways where youth and pleasure meet.

IN A WOMAN'S EYES

LAST night I walked with Love along the world,
The crowded world, so strange to Love and me,
The freighted sphere, that through the starry sea
To some uncharted port is blindly whirled.

I walked with Love, our faces luminous
With that unearthly light which lovers throw
Around their presence. Passing to and fro,
The hurrying people paused to look at us.

But in one woman's eyes there blazed red hate
For me,— a little woman like a dove,
Drooping and timid, who once walked with Love
Up to the very entrance of Life's gate;

But feared to lift its latch of destiny,
And feared to tread upon the sacred ground
Of that sweet grove where Love and I have found
The budding rose-tree of Infinity.

Her blue eyes burned down to my startled soul.
Then Love and I passed on into the wide
Compassionate solitude where we abide,
Where Peace has conquered Pain, and crowns his goal.

But through Love's eyes those sad eyes gazed in mine
Till dawn, not blazing now but dim with weeping;
And Love and I — a mystic vigil keeping —
Watched with her spirit in its tear-lit shrine.

O little sister! at your door to-day
There waits a love you would not understand;
As if you were my child in some dead land
To whose long memories I have lost my way.

Or is it all a dream? And from Love's heart —
Being so blended with him — do I gain
This comprehension of an alien pain,
A shadow in whose form I have no part?

THE WISDOM OF THE ROSE

“Do not wound me or I die,
O my Rose!” I heard him cry;
“Cover all thy thorns with soft leaves,
Lest thy lover sigh.”

But I pressed my sharpest thorn
Deep into his heart that morn;
Though the pain I felt him suffer
Left me, too, all torn.

And he died, as he had said,
Desolate, un comforted,
And the kind old earth, our Mother,
Drank the drops he bled.

A HIDDEN CHORD

A GIRL gazed long at Love in going by;
I saw the great light shining in her eye —

The look Love's eyes have when they gaze at me.
The quick tears wet my cheek — I wonder why!

THE PARTING GUEST

THE bright-winged Eros came one summer day
With roses for us, and a smiling claim
That we should join him in his magic game
Of making golden images of clay;
Until I grew weary of his play,
Weary and burdened with a secret shame
For every word we uttered in his name:
Now I am glad that he is flown away.

Let us go up, dear, to the wind-blown hill;
The air is pure there, and the strong pine-trees
Laugh in the light. . . . Seems the sheer height
too chill?
Nay, draw thy mantle close. In hours like these
The valley-dweller hears, when all is still,
The far-off roar of the eternal seas.

PETIT AMOUR

THERE was a little love all lily-pale,
Too fair and white to breast life's bitter gale.
It died, as little loves are wont to die,—
A gnat's death weighed as much in the Great Scale!

THE SPECTRE

OUT of the deep where dim-remembered years
And buried loves await Time's sure intent,
Rises the spectre of that far event
Which taught the master-mystery of tears
To my expectant heart. How strange appears
That face, which my imagination lent
The beauty of God, till — rapt and confident —
My soul forgot her heritage of fears!

SINCE last I looked in those illusive eyes,
My spirit in the lake of lustral flame
Has been washed white of everything that dies
In pain. And though this end was not an aim
He laboured toward, my freed life testifies
Its debt to him for power, and love, and fame.

SISTERHOOD

SISTER, the world would deem me a strange thing
To love the former love of my heart's king;
But jealous self bows to the mystic bond —
We two have drunk deep of one sacred spring!

THE BEGGAR

IN the dim years before I met with you
I dreamed how Love one day would come to me,
A plumèd knight, who on his bended knee
His sovereign lady would acclaim and woo;
And I should hold his homage as my due,
With smiling pride elude him, nor agree
Too readily to listen to his plea,
Though, as I dreamed, his every word was true.

Then came the night I looked into your eyes . . .
O love that burns and memory that sears!
I am no longer proud, though strangely wise
In the dark lore of ecstasy and tears,—
A starving beggar at your knees, who cries
For bread to dull the yearning of the years.

L'ACADEMISTE

A LEARNÈD fool discovered Love one day,
And sought to demonstrate his tyrant sway
 In dull iambs. While the muses yawned,
Love laughed — and shook his wings — and flew away!

THE STAFF

'Twas long ago, with fasting and with prayer,
 I cut my pilgrim staff from the great tree
 Of sacrifice, and it has been with me
In all my wandering. Rugged and bare,
And dry as ancient stone, up the steep stair —
 The winding granite stair of destiny —
 The staff has gone beside me steadily,
Aye, urged me on under the load of care.

But yesterday the beauty of the Spring
 Trembled through all my being, and I leaned
Upon my staff — to feel *it* quivering;
 To see that its whole rigid length had greened,
 Had grown all tender with soft buds, that screened
The eyes of Love. . . . And then I heard him
 sing!

AT MIDNIGHT

THERE is a nagging nettle in my bed,
And wayward Sleep goes by with careless tread:

To-night I saw a shadow on Love's face,
To haunt me for those idle words I said.

LOVE'S FEAR

I AM afraid, because I love thee so! —

Afraid lest the inexorable years

Instruct thee in the pitiless lore of tears —

Intimate lore I mastered long ago.

My courage falters for thee; but I know

Those secret drops the eyelids of all seers

Are bitter with, before the way appears

Where the wise lilies of compassion grow.

Dear, I shall see thee stricken with despair,

And have no anodyne to ease thy pain,

Nor promise of an answer to thy prayer.

For we invoke the Lord of Life in vain

Who plead against experience, or dare

To turn aside God's arrow — though Love be slain!

REQUIESCAT IN PACE

WHEN Love is dead — why stain his lips with lies!
Love knows no rest, no honour as he dies;

But goaded to feign joy and life, he wears
The world's arraignment in his weary eyes.

LOVE'S TRAGEDY AND COMEDY

ONCE on a time in my untutored past,
I raised an altar to Love's Tragedy
And covered it with rue and rosemary;
Then with sad rapture at its base I cast
My soul in dedication. But at last
Great Love himself came by and beckoned me
With slow indulgent smile, so bold and free
That Tragedy drew down her veil — aghast.

Behind Love came a being robed in flowers —
Love's Comedy, with summer in her glance;
The laughing sister whose transforming powers
Can turn life's laggard march into a dance.
With Love and her so gaily go the hours,
I bless them both for my deliverance.

WITHOUT THE TEMPLE

NAY, dear, I do not love you any more!
Put out the altar fire and close the door.

Love's holy temple that we built for him
I must profane not — now I love no more.

WHEN LOVE COMETH NOT

THE hours are ages when Love cometh not.
The very sunshine stays reservedly
Outside the window, and the vigilant sea
Booms with a lagging rhythm. Storm shadows blot
The scroll of heaven; while the uncertain spot
Of substance where my soul waits, seems to be
A desert island in eternity,
Washed by the tides of time, by God forgot.

This cruel hour will pass, and I shall hear,
Quivering, Love's eager hands upon the door . . .
Yet there might come a cold, inclement year
When Love would not avail me as before,
When I should be less lovely and less dear —
A wind-blown barque upon a barren shore!

EVEN AS YOU AND I

O BROTHER mine, I hear strange dole of you
From her who flatters — and takes toll of you!

She must lay off the blinding veil of Self
To see the strong, true, comrade soul of you.

THE MURDERER

To them that murder Love, of no avail
Shall be the penance of a thousand years.
At every midnight to my soul appears
Upon the sea of sleep a spectral sail.
I see the moonlight wavering and pale
On the remembered face of him that steers,
Deep graven with the ghosts of many tears —
The weariness of them that love and fail.

And when in the dawn-twilight cold and grey
I wake, despair and emptiness are mine.
Though I implore, the vision will not stay;
But on the purple dim horizon line
There lies a deeper shadow, for a sign
That in the night a soul has passed that way.

ROSE OF SHIRAZ

My lover is a Mussulman, 'tis said,
Whose loves are strung like jewels on a thread.
I'd rather be the clasp that holds the string
Than shine alone on any other head.

THE SONG OF THE WANDERING WOMAN

Thou hast broken my soul on the wheel,
Thou hast drunk of my sorrow as wine,
Thou hast branded my brow with thy seal,
And my faith thou hast hung for a sign.

Thou hast spilled all my dreams on the ground
And broken the strings of my lyre,
And the chords of my being are bound
By memories that mock at desire.

Thou has taught me the knowledge of years
In a day, of despair I am wise;
Thou hast moistened thy bread with my tears,
And groped in the gloom of my sighs.

O Belovèd, whose breath is my pain!
Thy shadow has darkened the world;
For thy spirit is thunder and rain,
And thy love is a meteor hurled.

But thy darkness is dearer than light.
So I die, and my cry to be free
Is a song of redemption to God in the night
For the sins of the world and of me.

MANY ADVISERS

O LOVE, I care not whether they were right —
The cold advisers, or the words they said,
When in the teeming silence of the night
I hear your heart throb underneath my head!

IN THE DAWNLIGHT

BELOVED, whose garment is life,
Whose eyes are the twin wonders of light and the
vision of light:
Give me a glimpse behind the cosmical veil that covers
Thy beauty,
Make palpable to me a touch of Thine inscrutable ten-
derness.
I would know the self-sufficiency of Thy love,
For I am weary of all Love's demands and apologies.
I would be solitary as the quiet stars,
Though intimate with the world as a nursing child
with its mother.
I would dream to-day on the orient lake with the lotus,

I would strive to-morrow with the northern pine in the
tempest.

In the morning I would wander alone looking for the
lost Pleiad in the vast meadows of Taurus,

I would swarm in the afternoon with the myriad bees
in the clover meadows of Earth.

I would mumble prayers with the pilgrims on the road
to Mecca,

I would laugh with the children of joy in the groves
of Bacchus.

Deep in the hearts of all the earth-kindred are secrets
I hunger to learn.

When I hear the call of the wild bird in the spring-
time,

There stirs in me the vague responsive mate-longing
of the woods.

The moody look in the eyes of the caged panther fills
me with fear;

But there is a thought in his brain that I need for a
marvellous poem,

And I shall never be wise till I understand its mean-
ing.

I have seen in the eyes of a dog I have slighted a look
that shamed me,

The dignity of the love that waits and questions not —
transcending my own for my lover!

I would be friends with the earthworm, and even the
robin distrusts me;

There is something known to the squirrels that books
have never taught me,

But when I question them they always run away.
And the silence that broods in the sacred aisles of the
 congregated pine-trees —
Is gone with the sound of my footsteps!

But somewhere the transcendent Wonder awaits me —
The vision of primordial and ultimate Love that is
 hidden in the dark of the ages before and after:
It but awaits the destined hour to make me one with
 all things.
Will the revelation come to me in the eyes of my lover?
Will it come in the symbols of a dream, haloed around
 with the light of its own interpretation?
Is it something divine that shall penetrate and possess
 me?
Or only the boundless expansion of all that is I?

TWIN-SOULS

I AM thy fellow-spirit
 Who journeyed at thy side
Before the Sphinx was builded,
 Before Osiris died.

I am thy soul's companion
 Who lost thee in the wave
That rose when old Atlantis
 Went down to her sea-grave.

One greater than great Isis
 Joined, with a rite sublime,
Thy soul and mine together
 In the far dawn of time.

When to thine eyes at midnight
 The tears unbidden start,
And vague bewildered longings
 Ache in thy lonely heart,

Know that my soul is calling
 Somewhere, and making moan
Unto the laggard Future
 To give it back its own.

When in the ghostly twilight
 A shadow on the wall
Sets all thy nerves aquiver —
 'Tis I, who mutely call;

And when the passionate springtime
 Renews its ancient quest,
I am the vagrant wonder
 That trembles in thy breast.

THE BUNGLER

I MADE a man out of my own great need.
I took the body of one ready-formed
In Nature's workshop, but its blood I warmed
With my own fire. Half of my soul I freed
To animate the form; the dream, the deed
That makes man godlike, these from the great void
I conjured, and my temple veil destroyed
That he might see the image burn and bleed.

But when I questioned this created thing,
There was no voice to answer; for the breath
Divine I had not given — could not give!
Confounded before God, I only bring
Into creation's hall this masque of death,
Which wears the mould of life but does not live.

SPRING-SONG OF THE MINSTREL

You who are to be my comrade
Down the wide road of the world,
Spring is come, with greening banners
On the loving wind unfurled.

Though the way ahead is rugged,
Like all ways that we have trod,
We will rest us every evening
In the leafy tents of God.

We will leave behind life's luggage,
We shall only need a lyre;
We will robe ourselves in sunbeams,
Warm us at the lyric fire.

Earth's possessions are so heavy,
They would hinder us, I fear;
For our feet must walk the rainbow
As it swerves from sphere to sphere.

Hark! The dewy dawn is calling
Us to take the sunward way.
Forward, singing wild, free music,
Let us tramp the trail of day.

THE LOVE OF WOMAN

DEAR, I will stand beside thee to the end,
Thy loving mate, thy comforter, thy friend.

If peace and plenitude shall bless thy ways,
I will enjoy them with thee all my days.

If shame and sin should be thy bitter lot,
My faith will cover thee and question not.

If thou art false to me, then I will say
Thy spirit fell asleep that cruel day;

But thou wilt wake, and need my loving care,
So I will watch with fasting and with prayer.

THE SLUMBERER

O THOU mysterious One lying asleep
Within the lonely chamber of my soul!
Thou art my life's true goal,
Thine is the only altar that I keep.
Rapt in the contemplation of thy repose,
I see in thy still face that Mystic Rose
Whose perfume is my soul's imaginings,
And Beauty at whose awesomeness I weep
With over-plenitude of ecstasy.
Thy slumber is the great world-mystery —
The paradigm of all the latent things
That in their destined hour Time magnifies:
Its emblems are the intimate hush that lies
Over the moonlit lake;
The wonder and the ache
Of unborn love that trembles in its sleep;
The hope that thrills the heavy earth
With presage of becoming, and vast birth;
The secret of the caverns of the deep.

THE VIOLIN

I HOLD between my quivering hands
A violin new-strung,
Wrought of a master builder's love
To be the passionate tongue
Of the unseen, to utter sounds
Never on earth yet sung.

Mute though it lies and musicless,
My breath across the strings,
Warm with the love that bares to me
The mystic soul of things,
Wakens the slumbering tones and stirs
Melodious murmurings.

Dreamy it is with memories
Of that reborn desire
That in this fibre buried deep
The builder's heart of fire.
O Violin! the magic bow
Is all the gods require,

Out of the silence of your soul
To smite the rhythmic flame
Of pain and rapture, and achieve
The indomitable aim,
Sounding through all infinity
The demiurgic Name.

O Violin, my violin!
'Tis fateful to command
The silences to utter sound.
The wise gods understand
When I would lift the magic bow
Why trembles so my hand.

BY THE SEA

OH, turn your dreamy eyes now to the sea!
Turn them a moment, dear, away from me
 To where the world, to our self-bounded sight,
Begins to be.

We two can see but such a little way!
Although the sun is bright for us to-day,
 What lies beyond this hour's horizon rim
We cannot say.

Perhaps that purple speck against the blue
May be the mast-head of some ship long due
 From destiny's dim port, with priceless pearls
For me and you.

Will we not melt the purest in our wine
And drink the draught together, for a sign
 Unto the gods of being that their best
Is yours and mine?

Or, if the cargo prove but common dust,
We will accept it, for the stars are just;
 And we will make a road of it, and laugh—
As brave ones must.

Dear heart, I have no easy words to say
The many things that I have felt to-day
 Here by the sea, with destiny and you
And life at play.

The sand around us, where to you and me
The world's self-conscious centre seems to be,
Is like that far unknown horizon rim
To those at sea.

And so this hour that sings itself away
Was on our life's horizon yesterday,
Although unknown to us as yonder ship,
As seeming grey.

Oh, turn your eyes from the horizon, dear!
My hands are trembling as the ship draws near.
Hold them and tell me — Love! — whether it be
With hope or fear.

GOOD-BYE

DEAR, we have made Love's fleeting days
Bewilderingly sweet,
But now the world's long, lonely ways
Yearn for your lingering feet.

Why do you tarry at the door
And gaze at me with tears?
Is it because time holds no more
Years like our vanished years?

Your royal gift of self I hold,
Shrined in my heart and brain;
The master-secret you have told
Me, I shall tell again.

And on that unregarded road
That you will travel soon,
The beauty that my love bestowed
Shall be some pilgrim's boon.

Justified now by the true past
And trusting truth to be,
I yield you to the future's vast
Inscrutable decree.

IN THE SOUL'S HOUSE

O BRIGHT-WINGED Love, whose ways are mystery,
Whose hours no man may reckon! I have swept
And burnished my soul's house, where long I kept
The body of one dead and hopelessly
Gazed at the flickering candles ranged by thee
Around his head and feet. But I who wept,
Now weep no longer; I who sadly slept
Under the pall, have burned it and stand free.
And I have climbed the stairs of the high tower
That looks upon the sunrise. Robed in white,
My spirit, ever virgin, waits the hour
When thou, Love, the dawn-wonder, veiled in light,
Shalt touch the world and me with quickening power,
And drive all dead things down the nether night.

THE COMING OF LOVE

I HAVE sought Love all my days;
Down the world's long dusty ways
 I have listened for his footsteps,
I have sung his praise.

I have offered in his name
Peace and solitude and fame
 On my spirit's hidden altar —
But he never came.

Sometimes in the tenuous night
I have felt the still delight
 Of a presence; but it vanished
With the morning light.

Till I wearied of the quest,
Of the yearning in my breast;
 And I whispered to my lone heart,
“Let us be at rest:

“Love's unsullied mystery
Is not meant for thee and me;
 We are too deep-stained with living —
It could never be!”

Then before I was aware
Came a breath across my hair,
 While a stillness strange and reverent
Held the waiting air;

And my spirit, strong and sweet,
Rose the long-sought guest to greet,
Rose — then bent to kiss the garment
Round his shining feet.

SONG OF THE MORTAL SUN-BRIDE

THOU Supreme One, Lord of my Lord,
Thou who art throned in the centre of each and every
thing,
The lights of whose chamber are souls that keep vigil,
Be merciful unto me in this night of my wakefulness
And leave me not alone with my own moon-shadow.

Leave me not alone, or the Dark will lay its hands
upon me!
I would be chaste of the touch of the hands of Dark-
ness —
I whom the Lord of Light held as a spouse this day in
the high noon,
While Earth lent me the veil of her own bridal,
And Ocean murmured the benediction of the waters.

On this night of wonder I would not be alone, O Su-
preme One!
For my Lord is away carrying Thy message through the
regions of the Underworld,
And when he returns he will bring the morning.
The Dark and the fear of the Dark will flee before
him,

And hide in the cavern of the mountains.
I shall need no more to cover my head with the veil of
the illusion of indifference,
For the eyes of my Lord have looked into mine in the
daytime,
And have found no shame therein.

Thou who art throned in the centre of each and every
thing,
Hide me in the closure of Thy hand until the morning,
For the eyes of fear are upon me.
Rememberest Thou the look of my Lord in the hour
of his beauty,
When the power of the gods was with him?
Uncovered he was by even a veil of vapour!
I saw in the face of the western sky the desire of him,
The Void opened her arms to him.
Now in the houses of Thine Underworld are many
dangers,
And the Dragons of the Zodiac are full of malice.

Oh, restore to me my Lord, my Belovèd!
The belt of Orion would be laid aside at Thy bidding;
Alcyon is a lily in Thy garden;
The Milky Way is a veil that hides Thy beauty.
And I? I am bound to the unlit side of one of Thy
smaller planets,
I am weak as a blade of grass, my days are drops of
rain.

The night is far spent.
Trembling I turn toward the dark closed tent of the
 East,
The tent whose floor opens into the future.
Straining my eyes for the first pale streak of dawn
 under the curtains,
I wait. . . .
Will it come like the thin white blade of a sword to
 slay me?
Will it come like the petal of a blush rose, tremulous,
 pink with unspeakable promise?

UNDER THE STARS

Love, you have made me dizzy with your eyes!
They are as deep and star-sown as the skies;
They reach above me in their bourneless blue —
O high, vast, swimming firmament of You!
Trembling, I clutch your hand, so sure and strong:
As one who gazes on the stars too long —
Till he is dizzy with their awful height
And the earth's motion through the trackless night —
Clings to the solid ground, and hides his face,
Lest he be flung into the sea of space.

THE MAN-CHILD

O WONDERFUL small being that my Love
Made of his dreams before he dreamed of me!
Trembling I bend above
Your terrifying softness, for I see
Something in you that made the stars afraid
Before their moons were made.
Strong is my soul to dare resistant things;
But with the pressure of your powerless hand
My will is like a bird with broken wings,
And all my words are written in the sand.

And she who bore you is the sacred vase
That held the wine of Love's high sacrament,
The still Madonna to whose bower was sent
The angel of God's grace.

No other worshipper will come like me,
O man-child! with such offerings for your sake;
For I know all the secrets of the sea,
And of men's souls that ache;
I know the mystery in women's eyes,
The mute word never said,
The laws that are the wonder of the wise,
And why they smile so strangely who are dead.

SAPPHICS

APHRODITE, lady of Love, O hear me!
I have sung thy praises the heavy day long;
Now at nightfall, sorrowing still, my heart bows
Humbly before thee.

Pity thou me, lonely without the garden
Where the rose blooms; mad for the beauty somewhere
Hidden from me, under the veil of twilight
Wonder and shadow.

Let me drink deep, deep of the dew that lies cool
On the young flower! Give me, O Aphrodite!
Dew for Love's thirst, nectar of night to ease this
Fever that burns me.

Give me Love's dark rose of divine caresses —
Rose of deep curled petals the day has known not,
Passion's own flower, woven of dream and perfume,
Ardour and anguish.

Thine are strange ways, pitiless Aphrodite!
Lone, denied love, weeping I go with mute lips
Where the night-blind, merciful waters will not
Know nor deny me.

OUTSIDE

TAKE me again to the house of thy heart, Belovèd!
Here in the outer world there is rain and thunder,
Dragons of unbelief and the formless terror.

Over the earth-face clings the night like a wet veil;
Down from the mountain comes the wail of the wild
things,
Up from the ocean the scream of the wind-blown sea-
mew.

I am alone with the night and the rain is upon me,—
Nothing to cover my head but a beggar's garment.
Take me again to the house of thy heart, Belovèd!

AN EPISTLE

You, too near me for grievance or pardon,
Nearer than pride, dearer than power,
Oh! could you not, while I prayed in the garden,
Watch with my soul one hour?

Out where the blossom of life uncloses,
You and I on the path of Love
Walked in his wistful moon of roses,
One with the bloom thereof.

You in your soul did the dream uncover,
 Reading the stars like a master of fate —
You the indomitable lover
 Daring to call me mate!

Never since Time for a bridal token
 Gave to the moon the reins of the sea,
Man to woman such word has spoken,
 Love, as you spoke to me.

How could I know that the book of sorrow,
 Blotted with tears by the ages shed,
Charged to my score for a stern to-morrow
 Every word you said?

I was a pilgrim, a lyric dreamer,
 Seeking the Grail round the sceptical earth;
You were my fiery faith's redeemer,
 Lighting the cold grey dearth.

Oh! when the eyes of the stranger signed you,
 Though I had lingered so long away,
Came no wraith of the past to remind you
 I should return some day?

Never since earth's remote beginning
 Two moons hung in a dual sky;
Never two spinners were one thread spinning
 But one spun awry.

Though the desired sun knows all places,
One line only his noon-rays mark;
Only one hemisphere he faces,
Leaving the other dark.

Love, when the waxing moon is rounded
I and my songs in your arms will sink.
Even now is the draught compounded
Our two mouths shall drink.

What of the veil of alien kisses,
Passionate hours and dreams and sighs,—
Veil of unendurable blisses
Now drawn over your eyes?

Once your eyes were wells untroubled,
Calm as the infinite Question of space:
Gazing deep, I beheld there doubled
Only my own rapt face.

Oh! shall I turn from the wells though clouded,
Missing the verity hid in the wrong,—
Turn with my pain and passion shrouded
Under the sleeve of song?

Nay, I will drink of the mingled waters,
Bitter-sweet though the drinking be,
Even as the pale wise merman's daughters
Drink the salt sweet sea.

Then shall I know the power that humbles,
 Feel the compassionate touch that heals,
See how the Self's thin mirror crumbles
 Under Life's vast wheels.

Then shall I know the hidden places,
 Turn the great last leaves of the Book,
Read the wonder in women's faces
 Where God dares not look.

THE ANGEL

God sent an angel down to me,
 A sweet and shining one,
With deep eyes veiled in mystery
 And garments like the sun;
And in its open hand the key
 No lone soul ever won.

I heard it singing down the sky
 Before I saw its face;
I listened, and I wondered why
 My life's familiar place
Seemed new with wonder, like a high
 Mountain awash with space.

It came and touched me with its hand,
 And kissed me on the brow,
And told me of a fabled land
 Far off, and whispered now

Things that I feared to understand —
A message and a vow.

And I was frightened by its power,
And anguished with its pain;
And all its beauty seemed the dower
Of my bewildered brain;
And I was eager for the hour
The angel should be slain.

But they are strong, the shining ones
Who house behind the stars,
And run wild races round the suns,
And bend the rainbow's bars,
And bring to grieve the moon's white nuns
Red messages from Mars.

I, too, am strong, and in affright
Because it seems so fair,
I find its throbbing throat, dream-white,
And clutch my fingers there,
And through the long, warm, moon-mad night
I slay it with despair.

And though it struggles in my hold,
And strives to kiss the hand
That strangles it, and turns me cold
With tender fire — the sand
Of Time falls fast, and I am bold —
But do not understand.

For I know not — Ah, woe is me! —
Whether I do right well,
And save me from the agony
No woman's lips may tell,
Or if I stand a moment free —
But doom my soul to hell.

TO THE UNKNOWN LOVE

SLOWLY the seasons come and go,
And we are still apart!
We know not each the other's face,
Though deep in the lone heart
Burns evermore the flame of hope —
The fever and the smart.

Sometimes within the nether mind
Vague memories arise
Of other times and other climes,
Of lips and brow and eyes.
Sometimes it seems the murmuring breeze
Is heavy with your sighs.

I hear your voice whenever a bird
Pours out its wild love song,
And in the moaning of the sea
When nights are drear and long.
My eyes look restlessly for yours
Through every passing throng.

Somewhere you lie alone to-night,
Calling me wistfully.
Oh, that the earthly veil might fall
And let the spirit see!
It may be only yonder wall
Separates you and me.

THE LONELY QUEST

LONG did my soul interrogate the stars,
For news of one remembered from a day
When earth and I were younger. A great way
We walked together, then the iron bars
Of God divided us. I bear the scars
Of lonely lives, of lonely loves; the spray
Of doubt has drenched my faith, but could not stay
My quest through all Time's changing calendars.

And last night when I walked where angels call
Softly to one another round the white
Circle of heaven, I found him once again,—
Found him a watcher on the Guardian Wall,
A torch of sacrifice, a nameless light
For the dark wilderness of mortal pain.

SALUTATION TO THE LORD OF LOVE

THOU who art Master of Life and of Death and of
Time, I salute thee!

Thine are the unknown ways and the soul's hid purpose
forever.

Under thy feet is the orbit of earth, and thy rhyth-
mical breathing

Blows the worlds through the void and the stars on
their weariless journey.

Thee I salute! Thou art fairer than youth in the
morn, my Belovèd,—

Source of the morn and youth; and the years are but
motes in the sunbeam

Thine eyes cast on the wind-swept ocean of Time.
By thy footsteps

Aeon on aeon is measured, and thine is the gauge of a
moth's life.

Thine is the gauge of the soul; and my song, and my
love, and my love's pain

Mingle as atoms of sand on the shores of the sea of
thy being.

Thee I salute! I, less than obedient dust in thy service,
Now am chosen, exalted high as the gods in thy favour.

Why is the marvel, Belovèd? How do I merit the
jewel

Hung by thy hand on my neck? In the night of my
need I besought thee,

Praying the boon of the mere stones pressed by thy
feet on the highway —

Only the stones of the road. Thou hast flung me the
stars for my wearing!

Even in childhood's days I, singled out for thy blessing,
Saw unveiled that Beauty which moves on the surface
of all things,

Saw revealed that quivering Wonder that hides in the
shadow;

Aye, thou hast sounded the Word of original speech in
my hearing.

These were as nothing, Belovèd! Only to-day have I
taken

Time by the hand, strong Love by the lips, great Life
by his breathing;

Now with Time I am one, and with Love, and with
Life and the whole world.

Thee I salute, O Belovèd, here at the hem of thy gar-
ment!

Lo, as a friend I behold thee, entering the door of my
dwelling

Robed in thy mantle of splendour — Thou the In-
spirer, the Unknown! —

Reaching to touch my soul with the torch that enkindles
the ages,

Lighting the fire on my altar, the yearning that knows
no abatement.

THE WAY

It is no smooth and daisy-spangled way
That my soul's feet have travelled. They that go
Always upon the safe path never know
The wider wisdom we who go astray
Learn of the gods that guide us. We must slay
Dragons at every turn; but they bestow
Their powers upon their conquerors, and we grow
Richer for every forfeit that we pay.

I walked with Toil and Dream and Love and Hate,
Who all their hidden lore to me confessed;
No staff had I, nor scrip to deal with Fate,
Only the lamp of faith to light my quest;
But when I stood before the goal's high gate,
'Twas opened wide, as for a royal guest.

III

AZELON

AZELON

O AZELON, I wonder why
Your smile should make the planet shake!
I wonder why your voice should make
The stars so dizzy in the sky.

I wonder why until the dawn
I cannot find the gate of sleep,
And dreams go by like frightened sheep,
Seeking the fold of Azelon.

I wonder how the thought of you,
Once pale as the first green of 'spring,
Has grown to cover everything,
With hopes like Mayflowers shining through.

When I confer with Destiny
The Moon is my astrologer,
Because I heard you speak to her
One midnight when you walked with me.

I question every daisy bed
For omens — but they answer not.
The very Spring is in a plot
To snarl my heart's bewildered thread.

The violet hints your eyes are blue,
And laughs — my query to evade.
'Tis strange, you make me so afraid,
I never dare to look at you!

O Azelon, my cheek is pale!
The season's footsteps are so slow!
A rose may half forget to blow
In listening for the nightingale.

Some day, when you are passing by,
If I should dare to drop one sweet
Shy pale pink rose-leaf at your feet —
I wonder would you question why!

FAR AWAY

If you should come and stand in yonder door
And look at me, I would not feel surprise;
For I have grown familiar with your eyes
In dreaming of you. All day long I pore
Over that volume of unwritten lore —
The words you might have said, the smiles, the sighs
That wild imagination prophesies
When we come face to face, as heretofore.

Yet if a letter came for me to-day
In your strange writing, I should tremble so
The very messenger, I think, would know
Something my soul is yet afraid to say
Even in the dark, when tossing to and fro
I seek the path of sleep, and lose my way.

IN MAY

SOMETIMES a fear blows cold upon my heart
That we may come no nearer, after all;
And then the grey November shadows fall
Over the green May meadows. Many start
Upon the way of Love, only to part
At the first cross-roads; and the buds are small
Upon Love's apple-trees — Oh, very small! —
And ripening days are distant as thou art.

But when at night on each celestial bough
I watch the sweet star-blossoms one by one
Unfold their shining leaves, the morrow's sun
Rising at dawn seems no more sure than thou;
And my soul's timid, silent orison
Is answered by thy soul's unworded vow.

PERVASION

You are all vague and haunting things to me.
The shimmer of the moonlight on the mere
Is your strange being, and the brooding fear
Of the black midnight. Everywhere I see
A symbol of you; in the cedar tree
That dreams beside my window, in the clear
Eyes of the lonely stars, in the austere
And melancholy ocean's mystery.

Never the moon beholds my secret hours
But you behold me, never the grey dawn
Comes without word of you on its cool breath.
And will I feel you in my coffin flowers,
When over Time's cold borders I am drawn
By the inexorable desires of Death?

SHADOW-LOVE

DEAR, do you wonder when I turn away
Sometimes without a word? 'Tis lest you know
The frightened secret I have guarded so!
When you are gentlest, then a wild dismay
Blows round my soul's frail dwelling, and I stay
Far from the windows. Only when you go
And leave me alone with Love does the flame glow
White on the midnight altar where I pray.

How strange it is that I who fear your eyes
Fear not your soul! for through the grove of dreams
I walk with you unveiled and unafraid
In spirit converse. But the dawn denies
Faith to the man and woman, nor redeems
One lovely pledge the daring shadows made.

OLD SONGS

TO-DAY I read some strange old songs of yours,
Sung to another woman long ago.

Love, I am glad! for now I know. . . . I know
That you *can* love, and the wild knowledge cures
My deepest pain of all. Passion endures:

A blade well tempered in the furnace glow
Never grows brittle, but endures the snow,
The ice, the night of boreal temperatures.

I bless her, that veiled woman of the past,
I pledge her beauty in my soul's red wine.
She surely is less than I, for I am last. . . .

Mine is the future. And her star shall shine
High in my firmament, immortal, vast. . . .

For I am Woman, and the songs are mine.

LOVE-GLANCE

LAST night I saw a look in your strange eyes —

A light — a something that half blinded me,
So like it was to the sudden ecstasy
Of waking love, which starts in sweet surprise
That dawn is at the window. . . . But too wise,

Too wise am I in secret tears to see
The sun at midnight, or a prophecy
Of joy in any star in your dark skies!

And yet . . . great Athon gazed at me just so,
The night he made his holy vows a stair
For me to climb by. . . . But my brain says no:
The veriest pagan may recite a prayer
To his own god before Christ's image. Go
Thy lone strong way, my heart. Beware,
beware!

THE SUBSTANCE AND THE SHADOW

Why is your sadness sweeter than all song,
And the cold clasp of your mysterious hands
More warming than the fire? Ghosts of far lands
And lives unnumbered at your coming throng
The chambers of my house, and in the long
Hours of your absence your still wraith demands
More than your presence dares — and understands
The weakness of my heart you deem so strong.

Until I fear some day I may mistake
The substance for the shadow, and reveal
All that I tremble now lest you surmise.
Wary my heart must be, for pride's cold sake;
And lest you be an infidel, conceal
With painted screens the door of paradise.

THE BECKONER

ONE day a vision came and beckoned me
Out of the still grey halls where solitude
Waits for the guest whose coming must elude
The mocking eyes of Life and Destiny.
I followed, and the vision bade me see
The garden of dreams whose lilies never die,
The rainbow of Love's promise in the sky,
The arbour of faith whose walls are mystery.

Breathless I cried, "Who art thou?" And he said,
"My name is *Might Have Been*. I am accurst
By all men, but my boons shall make thee strong:
Take on thy lids my chrism of tears unshed,
My bitter wine of knowledge for thy thirst,
And for thy breast the barren rose of song."

THE GATE

You are the gate of that walled paradise
That I can never enter, and your word
Is like the angel of the flaming sword
That turns all ways. Belovèd, I am wise —
Not from the tree of knowledge, but your eyes;
And sad with all the meanings underscored
In God's great book of Passion. . . . Dream adored!
adored!
I slay it daily, but it never dies.

You are the gate behind whose iron bars
The rose of life is red, and in the dusk
The angel walks among the waving grain.
I walk outside, beneath the shivering stars;
My only harvest is the empty husk,
My only flower the lily of white pain.

THE SECRET JEWELS

OH, little do you know how rich you are
In priceless jewels! I have given you
Thousands of pearls, my tears, all pure and new
From the deep seas of sorrow; a great bar
Of rubies for your sword — not mined afar,
But my heart's blood drops; opals of strange hue —
My moonlight dreams that never will come true;
And crowning all, my faith — a diamond star.

But these rich gifts I bring you secretly,
Hiding them in the dark and silent ground
Beside your door; for I could never bear
That you should know how you impoverish me,
Could not endure that when the gems are found
You gaze at me in wonder — and not care!

WHEN WE ARE OLD

My friend, when you and I are very old,
And meet each other after many years,
And sit together by the fire, that cheers
Those shivering ones whose love-fires have grown cold;
Then maybe I will say to you: "Behold
These sweet song-flowers I watered with my tears
When I was fresh as they; my woman-fears
Hid them till beckoning Death had made me bold."

And lying all alone in the dark night,
You will remember that my mouth was red,
My hand was warm, my shoulder smooth and white;
Remember and weep the love you never gave,
And toss till daylight on your dreamless bed,
And shudder — thinking of the lonely grave.

SIC TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI

With you pass all the glories of the hills,
Green with the dream and promise of the spring.
The robin leaves on chill autumnal wing
My budding Northland, and the hidden rills
Shudder as in November. The wood stills
Her breath to listen for you, who now sing
No more about her chambers. Everything
Beautiful passes with you, and vague ills
Whisper together hoarsely just outside

The door of life. . . . O Love! the clouds can tell
In sobbing rain their heaviness, the tide
Rises with word of power; but I who dwell
Between the granite walls of pain and pride,
With never a tear endure the great farewell.

PASSION SEEDS

'Tis sweeter far to gaze in your soft eyes
One little moment, without word or touch,
Than any love-embrace I ever knew.

Your breath the other night upon a book
We read together, fluttered a loose page —
And my soul shivered like a willow-leaf.

What mystic counsel did your mother hold
With God, ten moons ere ever you were born,
That you should wear the rainbow round your head?

Here is a riddle for the dual Sphinx:
When you are far away — you seem so near;
When you are near — you seem so far away.

Until I loved you, Dear, I never knew
How sad the eyes one passes in the street,
How still the world an hour before the dawn.

If you should die and learn my guarded love,
Then would I burn a lamp till the sun rose —
Fearing to face your spirit in the dark!

Your letters, Dear, are like the gentle winds
That make the grey woods weep, on some soft day
In winter when the boughs are bare of leaves.

To-day I heard a wandering harp-player
Under my window, and in every tone
The words of love that you will never say.

If I could dip my pen in your red blood,
Then would I write such songs — such passion songs —
That even you would wonder whom I loved.

The schools of all the world could not have taught
So deep a knowledge as my soul has learned
In the stern college of your calm regard.

How strange that I, who have explored far seas,
Charting new islands on the map of Love,
Should steer my boat upon this jagged reef!

Your lip is like a petal of that rose
That blossomed in the shadow of the Cross —
Red as the mystic flower of Golgotha.

How many hopeless lovers must have died,
Hiding in guarded shrines their sacred fire,
Ere Sappho wept for Phaon in old days!

Maybe some lonely heart in unborn years
Will bless your coldness: Had you given me love,
I had made songs for you — but not these songs.

Your shadow on the granite wall of pain
Has shown me more of beauty than the full
Sunlight in all the rose-bowers of the world.

What matter though the iron doors of Fate
Part us forever? Love is everywhere,
And you are mine — though I am never yours.

I never knew how chaste my spirit was
Till I touched you: Love's scarlet flame is mild,
But his crucible is whiter than blown snow.

I saw a man and woman with a child,
Happy together . . . and I stole away
Among the shadows of the lonely woods.

Your praises of my songs are like the dole
Given a minstrel who in silence knows
He is the secret first-born of the King.

I dread to see the blossoms of the spring:
The violet, the white lily and the rose,
Will haunt me with your eyes, your brow, your mouth.

Before I saw your face, I always wondered
Why the blue moonlight, and the moaning sea,
And the grey dawn, had filled my soul with tears.

"I care no more," I said, and lightly sang.
And then I saw you passing in the street. . . .
And I was very still, and sang no more.

If you should ever understand and say,
"Take all I have, though less than your long love,"
Then would I smile — but go far off from you.

Only from you to me the Love Supreme
Or nothing — as that rebel archangel
Chose hell to standing second before God.

Your boon of thorns is my immortal wreath;
And save for you I never could have known
How One so loved the world — that loved him not!

THE STILLBORN

THE burden of my love for thee has grown
Intolerable; 'tis heavy as a child
Under my heart, and struggles to be born.
Long have I borne it in my burning womb
Hidden from all; have laughed and gone my way
Among the virgins. . . . But my hour is come,
My mantle of indifference grows too narrow
Longer to screen my secret, and I creep
Into the lonely garden of confession
Under the stars; no lesser eyes should see
The weakness of my tears. The stars are old,

And some bear women's names. Surely the stars
Will understand; surely they will not chide,
Nor shame me with cheap pity, who am strong
And ask no pity of the stars or gods.

How long ago it seems, that winter night
When in a sudden rapture the small seed
That now has grown so mighty, fixed itself
Deep in the soil of my being! I have seen
Since then the snow upon the rolling fields
Make way for the daisy, I have seen the rose
Blossom and fade, the busy harvesters
Gathering the grain. Now in a little while
Shall I behold something the dews of night
Will warm their liquid hearts to lie upon.

Let me not cry aloud, remembering
All things are born in pain; remembering
That every pain shall pass and be no more
Even a memory. Had not yonder plain
Pangs poignant as a woman's in giving birth
To the blue mountain? Are not master-songs
Born of the poet's travail and his tears?
Let me not cry aloud! Had my own mother
Never known pain, I never had known song,
And the green world had never known of me.

A little while and I shall understand
More than Minerva, answer the great question
That graved the wrinkles on the Sphinx's brow.
Only a little while and I shall look

Love in the face — if it be not born dead,
Having endured too deep prenatal grief.
Shall I be frightened when I feel its breath,
Knowing the woe that waits all breathing things?

Much have I sung of Love in other days,
When I have walked with Joy in the high hills,
Careless and free. Having beheld its face,
Shall I pass awed and silent down the years,
Hushed with a knowledge beyond joy and song?

THE INTERVENER

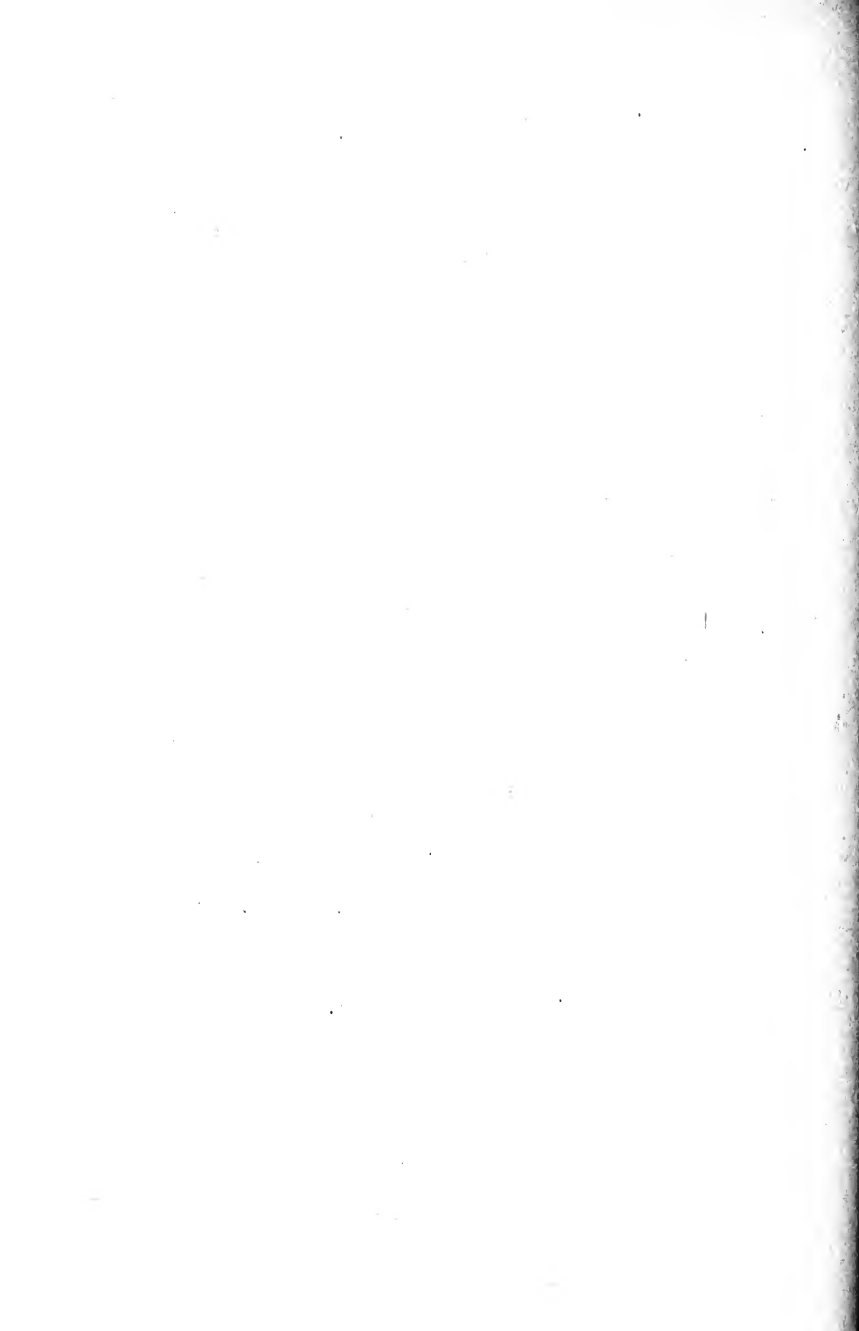
I LEANED entranced upon a flowery gate,
When a stern figure faced me in disguise.
I thought it was the iron hand of Fate
That turned me from that poppied paradise;
But gazing up, with stifled word of hate,
I saw instead — my Guardian Angel's eyes!



IV

THE HUMAN MIRROR

A RHAPSODY



THE HUMAN MIRROR

A Rhapsody

I

BELOVED, all the beauty and the dream
That trembled into being from the dark,
When God's original creative spark
Went singing through the void of the Supreme,
Thou dost reflect for me
In the effulgent mirror of thy form.
Everywhere on thy warm
And glimmering surface beckons visibly
The wraith of that divine and mystic key
That can unlock the double-doors of Being.
Thy semblances are symbols in my sight
Of that Reality beyond our seeing,
Whose shadows are our glimpses of the Light.

Oh, that thine eyes could see
The epiphany thou art!
Love's vision has unveiled the moving mirror,
And in thy clear reflection shown to me
Him, thy great archetypal counterpart —
Creator and Preserver and Destroyer —
Whose breath brings forth the whirling universe,
And whose inbreathing draws it back again,
In the dark Sea of Silence to immerse
The links of Time's long chain.

All forms lie only half-concealed in thee:
The curve that hints the circle hidden, the line
Straight as an arrow from Creation's bow,
The pentacle, the trine,
The royal square, the demiurgic sign,—
These are the symbols of thy sovereignty.
Magi of Love, they will reveal to me
The mysteries they know.

Thy kisses are the very potency
Of the immortal Breath,
A whisper on the winds of ecstasy
Blown from the green fields beyond life and death.
My fluid soul that presses quivering
The shores of Being at the touch of thee,
Is one drop of that primal, spatial sea
Thrilled by the vibrant touch of God to sing
The passion-song whose notes are stars and prayers;
And in the rush of joy my spirit dares
The rhythm of that planetary music.

O thou star-wanderer!
Would that I knew the tenuous winding way
Thou hast ascended through our terrene clay
The seven stairs of Life —
The toil, the unimaginable strife!
Aye, or that other longer, stranger road,
Whose deep declivities are gods and æons,
The road of thine original descent
From Him, the Immanent,
The One, the inconceivable Abode.

Thine every footstep seems
To hint of ways whose chart He only hath;
Infinite must have been thy days, thy dreams,
Thy converse on the path.

Son of the Presence,
The boundaries of thine inheritance
Are one with thy great Sire's divine romance.
Thine are the potencies of endless life,
And on thy lips is that unchanging word
Whose lingering cadence every age has heard.
In thee are all the pictures of the past,
The shadowed wraith of everything that is,
The seeds of all realities to be.
Unseen they lie, in silent companies,
Waiting my touch that irresistibly
Calls them to manifest their forms to me.
Even reminders of ancestral wrong
Survive in these fond arms wherein I rest —
The powers at whose behest
The ages made me weak, and made thee strong;
But I forgive and love like all those women
Whose lives are the background of my palimpsest,
And over their dead story I grave my song.

Revealed in thee, bards of the unborn days —
Their foreheads honoured with prophetic bays
The seeds of whose home trees have yet to climb
Through the cold soil of time —
Urge me to give my songs to pave the ways
Their unshod feet must travel.

II

Thy body, my Belovèd, is to me
The alphabet of Life's deep mystery;
By it my soul can falteringly spell
The hidden story of humanity,
And all its perilous future paths foretell.
O miracle of form!
O ecstasy of spiritual line,
Where human sight is lost in the divine!
Dizzy with adoration I have lain
In the rapt stillness of the summer night,
Companioned by the intimate sweet moon,
Gazing at thee — until the sheer delight
Of vision grew bewildered, even to pain,
Losing itself in swoon.

The mould wherein thy wonder-breathing flesh —
Young and so flower-fresh —
Was wrought but yesterday of joyous clay,
Is older than the memory of thy race.
It has persisted with thee, birth by birth,
Since that self-confident day
In the triumphant springtime of the earth,
When the strong groping spirit of Man first uttered
That ritual of his immortality.
Varied by destiny, desire and time,
Experience and clime,
The shadows thine enduring form has cast
Upon the mirror of mortality —
Their little, gesturing, vivid hour to last —

Have one by one passed irretrievably
Into the dark enclosing frame of the grave.
But still the Uncreated waits in thee,
Urging — through mazes where no mind can trace
The utter diffusion of Its unity —
Eager reincarnations of thy race.

III

Oh, that my questing soul could understand
This mystery of Life that hides in thee!
I read no message of Infinity
In the star-mirroring, stupendous sea,
So potent to inspire
Even as one small motion of Love's hand.
O golden life of spirit, dream and fire,
Compounded in the cabinet of birth!
Art thou my Love's, prisoned by his desire
Within his house of sublimated earth?
Or, art thou in thyself that ambushed Thing,
Whose intricacies of doom
Astound the figures of man's reckoning?

Maybe thou art the Master of the loom,
Stronger than Time, inscrutable as Fate,—
The Weaver who by devious delays
Held the gold threads that are my Lover's days
Suspended in the air,
Until it served thy purposes to fill
The tiny but inevitable square
Sacred to him, his own predestined part

In the grand pattern of Kabalistic skill —
The human fabric of thine awful art.

What is that life, Belovèd, that I feel
Vibrant, self-conscious, in each atom of thee?
By aid of Love's white magic I would steal
The veil which hides that habitant from me,
Baring the jealous beautiful strange face
Science may not uncover —
The face of Life itself, therein to trace
The mystery of my Lover.—
Could I unveil its wrappings, could I see
That unit of untiring energy
Which animates thy fervid, throbbing clay,
I, though a time-bound mortal, might arouse
Visions, long-slumbering, of Creation's Day;
I might behold the eyes of Him whose spouse
Was the great Paradigm —
Mother of Form, of Motion, and of Time —
Whose memory endows
The forms of earth with their bewildering beauty .

IV

The soft rose-lining of thy human veil
Is the soul-essence of that crimson hue
The gods know as desire;
Chastened it was in that creative fire
Which left thy gleaming surface ivory-pale,
Unshaded by the dust whereof it grew.
Thy devious veins whose deep blue courses seem

Mysterious hieroglyphs all over thee,
Are secret rivers of Infinity,
Rolling their pulsing ways through meadows of dream
Down to the mystic sea,
The restless sea whose tides are life and death.
Oh, that the river's flood might cover me!
That I might breathe no longer my own breath
In this cold isolate austerity
Of life outside of thee!
Love, let me feel the divine ravishment
Of thy deep veins' inviolate content.
The beating of thy heart is to my ears
The rhythm of the sacramental mass
Sung by the vested years,
As one by one with measured steps they pass
In rapt procession round the reverent spheres.
That superhuman music moves my soul
Even as the wind's wild music moves the sea,
While under and around and over me
Thy heartbeats sound their mighty organ roll.

V

Pulsing and luminous, the fringe of light
Around thy form is visible to me
In the dark night.
In that ellipse I see
The orbits of the world of pain and pleasure,
That round thy heliocentric heart, my Love,
Tread their melodious measure,
Like to the ether-wandering worlds above.

What draws the glory of thine aureole
I know not, save it be
The fierce attraction of the cosmic Soul.
Its oscillation blinds and dazes me:
It rises from thee like the shimmering heat
From metal in the sunlight, when the wheat
Ripens, and meadow-lands exude
Their second plenitude.
Is this the fiery essence of thy being,
That at the stations of its outward course
Calls to its flaming source?
These mysteries of light which beckoned so
That I bound on my sandals for the quest,
Challenge me now, and would my steps arrest,
Raising a warning finger lest I go
Even to the cave of the Unmanifest
That brooks no mortal guest.
Yet strange things do I see recorded here
In this thy Soul's symbolic atmosphere:
Outlines of lands, remembered mistily,
Where I have walked with thee
In lanes of love, or other paths austere.

In thy far wanderings through realms unknown,
When in the night alone
With the wise ancient retrospective sea,
Have not vague memories come and questioned thee
Of bygone days with me?
When thou hast heard the moon-mad nightingale's
Lyrical wooing of his love, the rose,—
Whose answering sweetness to his passion flows

In yearning fragrance through her filmy veils,—
Hast thou not felt the haunting atmosphere
Of something lost, yet memorably dear?
Has not a deep, oppressive emptiness
Cried in thy heartache for a happiness
Whose lovely name even thou couldst not guess —
Being the speech of some forgotten sphere?

On Thought's horizon I have caught the gleam
Of setting stars, through memory's twilight haze,
And known them for the ghosts of other days,
When thou and I together, my Belovèd,
Dreamed the sweet human dream:
These phantoms walk with thee in all thy ways.
The perfume of thy passion-shadowed hair
Is heavy with the mystery and the prayer
That brooded over Asia in old time.
Thine eyes have the deep meditative calm
Of India in her prime,
Pure with the peace of the eternal Brahm.
Thine eyebrow's dusky line
Is hieroglyphic, an ideal sign
Occult with ancient meanings, but half hid,
Of Sphinx and pyramid.
Every reflection on thy mirror cast
Is teeming with the spectres of the past.
In what dim dawn of elemental dream
Did thy first vibrant image agitate
The tenuous substance of the shadowland?
The far events these glyphs commemorate,
My dust-blind spirit may not understand.

VI

Turn to me, Love, thy sweet, reflective eyes!
What beauty-curtained thoughts convene behind
Their windows in the chamber of thy mind? —
The secret chamber to which God denies
That even I should any entrance find.
Hurling the atoms of Himself apart,
Did our primordial Projector fear
That in our gravitation back again,
Proclivity might carry us too near —
One to another yearning passionately —
Making his purpose plain
Before the destined hour of Unity?
And, fearing so, did He reserve the mind,
That one inviolate and lonely centre
Even Love may not enter?
Yet often, my Belovèd, I have caught
Ethereic intimations of thy thought,
When hands and lips and eyes were motionless.
Guided by these, my hopes have dared to guess
Some hidden entrance that would yield to me,
Could I but find the key.

It is a master-workshop, and a temple,
That Nature-guarded chamber of thy thought.
There in seclusion potent things are wrought,
And potent worship offered to the Light
By day and night.
There as the solar periods go by,
The resolute magician dares alone

The demon legions of the magic zone —
Phantasmal forms that seek to terrify
Even the valiant ones at whose behest
The veil is raised that guards the great Unknown.

Thy sovereign will is that arch alchemist
Whose power no spirit can utterly resist.
Held in its crucible, Life's baser things
Are melted into Beauty's virgin gold:
Motives of men, their rhythms manifold,
Their fierce desires, their dreams and falterings,
All are transmuted by that master bold,
Through Love — the universal alkahest
Of the magician's quest.

Lone, and besieged forever by the rout
Of the unhallowed sons of Fear and Doubt,
The patient worker that abides in thee —
Shaping new beauties for eternity —
Shall be the prophet of a purer art,
Thou Poet of my heart!

VII

The reverent soul in me
Would swing Love's sacred censer silently
Before that altar where the soul in *thee* —
Pure as a flower to heaven looking up —
Burns in its golden cup.

Thy spirit is a lamp to light my way
Through the bewildering mazes of the earth.
Beyond this perilous dearth
It beckons, and I go no more astray
After the ignis fatuus of fame,
Nor pleasure's wavering flame.
That love-trimmed, faith-filled lamp burns steadily,
Even in the winds of pain it flickers not.
Signal divine of God, it marks for me
The destined earthly spot
Where for my wind-blown soul passage may be
To the far calling ocean of unity.

VIII

These are the seven jewels the stars intrust
To the rash keeping of the house of dust:
Thy form, thy life, thy garment of desire,
Thy veiled etheric record of the past,
Thy dual mind — the dream that will not last
And the immortal vision framed in fire,
And IT, the golden microcosmic spark
Of the one Flame whose word awoke the vast
Of the original dark.

This house of dust that shelters thee, Belovèd,
This body where thou tarriest a day,
Is the hall of learning told of by the sages
Of older, wiser ages,
That every traveller dwells in on his way.
Over the sombre walls are gaily spread

The fabrics of illusion, blue and red,
Violet, gold, and every lovely hue
The weavers knew.
The jewel of the Great Ensnarer glows
Temptingly here wherever the light falls,
And in the dark malevolently glows.
Never while lingering within these walls
Hope to enjoy repose.
Yet in these chambers of illusive grace
A little while I would abide with thee,
Till Beauty — thy co-dweller — shows to me
The wonder of his face.

IX

O benedicite unutterable!
I see thee in the glory of the sun —
Blindingly beautiful.
Even in mystic visions there is none
Comparable with thee when that sovereign light
Reveals thee so to my interior sight.
The petals of the rose are not so fresh
As the blossom of thy flesh,
Nor is the marble of Pentelicus
To be compared with thee for gleaming splendour,
Thou culmination of the marvellous!

When first I saw thee in the light of the sun,
A film undreamed of fell from off my eyes;
Then I beheld what Beauty meant to Him
Who made it, as His own primeval bride —

Made it and veiled it even from the wise —
From all save those whom love had purified.
But though I had the voice of the seraphim,
I could not make the blind world realise
The vision in my eyes.
Belovèd, where the lights and shadows meet
Along thy sun-illumined form, I see
Glory liquescent, quivering mystery.
O wonder from thy forehead to thy feet —
Wonder of Beauty, by whose ravishment
Spirit and mind are blent!

Dazed with infinitude, I lay my face
In the warm intimate shelter of thy breast:
But even here the vision finds no rest,
Here the fond relic of a lost embrace —
A union riven in some forgotten storm —
Whispers imagination of a time
When we were one, even in outer form;
And this sweet useless remnant yet survives
To explain the yearning of our separate lives.

X

I hold thy lovely head between my hands,
With fingers buried in thy clinging hair.—
O maze, whose mystery is my despair!
Symbol whose meaning no man understands!
Art thou an emanation and a glory
Of the indwelling spiritual fire,
A million-threaded lyre

[Musical with the immemorial story
Of bodiless desire? —
The whisper of thy locks across my face
Is like the quick embrace
Of a passing spirit in the startled air,
Potent as faith and passionate as prayer.

XI

O benedictive hands, that hold for me
Divine response to all my orisons!
Ye are the same that down the past I see
Wildly uplifted to the deity
Of prehistoric suns.
The lonely dream whose destiny was man,
Yearning to reach and take
The blessed *something* of his dumb desire,
Performed the miracle — and so began
Beautiful hands, like these of Love's, that make
Such complicated music on the lyre
Of my imagination.

Wonderful are these nails, the boundary
Of thine extension in the outer vast:
Curled rose leaves, that some danger of the past,
Some ancient cruelty,
Petrified in their fragrant loveliness.
But mindful of the garden of delight
Where first they bloomed, they spring as readily
To the clutch of Love's invincible caress,
As to the sterner fierceness of the fight.

XII

I gaze into the dark dream of thine eyes,
Deep and bewildering as etheric space —
The night-veil of the skies
Wherein God hides His unendurable beauty,
Only revealing in the points of light
Glimpses of His inviolable grace
Subdued for human sight.
O visual spheres, to whose formation went
The very essence and the potency
Shrined in each element!
In you the dust of earth is most divine,
And the uncertain substance of the sea
Held for a vast design
So marvellous that man might almost fear it:
The revelation to the prisoned one —
The lonely, earth-bound spirit —
Of that material, cosmic tapestry
Woven of stars and earth and air and sea.
For this the patient watchman of the Sun,
Sleepless through ages in Time's wilderness,
Has burned his mighty lamp that men might guess,
Seeing the web, the purpose of the Weaver.

Through the occult dark centres of thine eyes
God looks at me.
O gaze that terrifies!
O loving, brooding Dweller that is God!
In those impenetrable deeps I see
The clear, transcendent Question looking out

Into this world of Doubt;
A separate Something, dwelling there alone,
Guarding a hidden purpose of its own.

Through what long changes in the forms of things
Hast thou, indwelling Wonder, found thy way
Triumphing through the ever-lightening rings,
From thy first blind desire to the outer day?
Æons have passed thee, stumbling in the dark!
Thy passage left a mark
In the soft substance of eternity
That only God could see.
How lonely and bewildered was thy going!
The whole blind length of solitude thy way
Led, and the width of pain,
The height and depth of yearning and dismay.
Then in a dream thy vision, lightning-taught,
Leaped through unknown dimensions of the brain,
And the miracle was wrought.
All this I read, Belovèd, in the wise
Deep volume of thine eyes.

XIII

Last night I whispered in the noiseless dark
A message from my spirit unto thine;
Then in a rush of wonder did I hark
Thine unseen spirit's answer. And the sign
Of nearness made me dizzy, as with wine
From the blue bowl of the great Mysteriarch.
I touched thee not, beheld thee not; the world —

For all that I might see —
Rounded her shoulder between thee and me.
And then my whisper and thine answer, clear
As Venus questions Mars across the still
Blue solar chamber, with the same heart-thrill
As mine, and makes him hear;
And the two planets counsel in the night —
Maybe about the birth
Of a spirit on the intervening earth,
Whose natal hour makes him their neophyte.

O wonder-gift of speech!
Ethereal medium on whose vibrant wings
Thy brain's imaginings
Cross the great circles of the Void, and reach
My brain, that yearns to thine even as my mouth
Yearns to thine eager mouth.
Thy voice to me is that high Emanation
Out of whose glories came
The ordered hierarchies of creation —
Spouse of the unimaginable Name!
Between thy lips there comes to signal me
The Word of the great deep,
Wherein the twain — Memory and Prophecy —
Their world-long council keep.
Thy voice, Belovèd, is the signature
After the great *clef* of the planet Earth —
The key wherein my being's overture
Was written by the star that ruled my birth.

XIV

Yea, breathe upon me, Love, that I may live
With an intenser life.

I would that all my being's ways were rife
With the sweet certitudes *thy* life can give.
Thy breathing has that rhythm the ocean taught
The artless children of the Lunar reign,
Before primeval Feeling married Thought
And brought forth all their progeny of pain.

How beyond all earth's meaning is the sweet
Low whisper of that breath which comes to me
As from the very lips of Eternity —
Thou visible paraclete
Out of the timeless vast Invisible!
Thy breath is a caress the bodiless Past
Bestows upon me as a mystic charge,
Through me to kiss the last
Breath on the bodiless Future's yearning marge.

So solemn the mere thought,
I half forget thy wistful human sweetness,
Without whose glamour all these things were naught
But colourless abstractions, void of worth
Here on the warm, emotion-throbbing earth.

XV

Sometimes the dual rhythm of thy breath,
Love, and thy beating heart,

Bewilder me with their involvèd motion.
In some uncomprehended way thou art
One with the power of God that measureth
The heart-throb of the ocean,
And the wild wind's premeditated breath.

XVI

I feel the benediction of thy dear
Soft hand upon my face.
From thy caress long rays of ecstasy
Stream far beyond my being's narrow sphere,
Losing themselves in the blue deeps of space.
How does thy lightest touch unseal in me
Vials of yearning attar, that flow out —
Pouring their passionate fragrance over thee!
Beneath thy hand what strains
Of ethereal music cry along my veins!

XVII

Yea, make me one with thee!
Clasp me and hold me in that unity
Stronger than thought, keener than pain —
The only thing intense enough to seem
Real in this world of shadow and vague dream.
Something we must attain
Calls us, surrounds us, penetrates our lives
With that unrest no mortal comprehends.
The answering soul ascends
Eagerly rung by rung the ladder of flame;

Heedless of earth, of heaven, it blindly strives
Toward its supernal aim.

The angels listen, poised on moveless wings,
And all invisible things
Rush through the void, attracted by the light
That shines around us in the teeming night.
The sounds of unknown seas are in our ears.
Time is no more, but lost in one accord
Are the moments and the years;
And seraphs waft us with their orisons
The fragrance of the roses of the Lord.

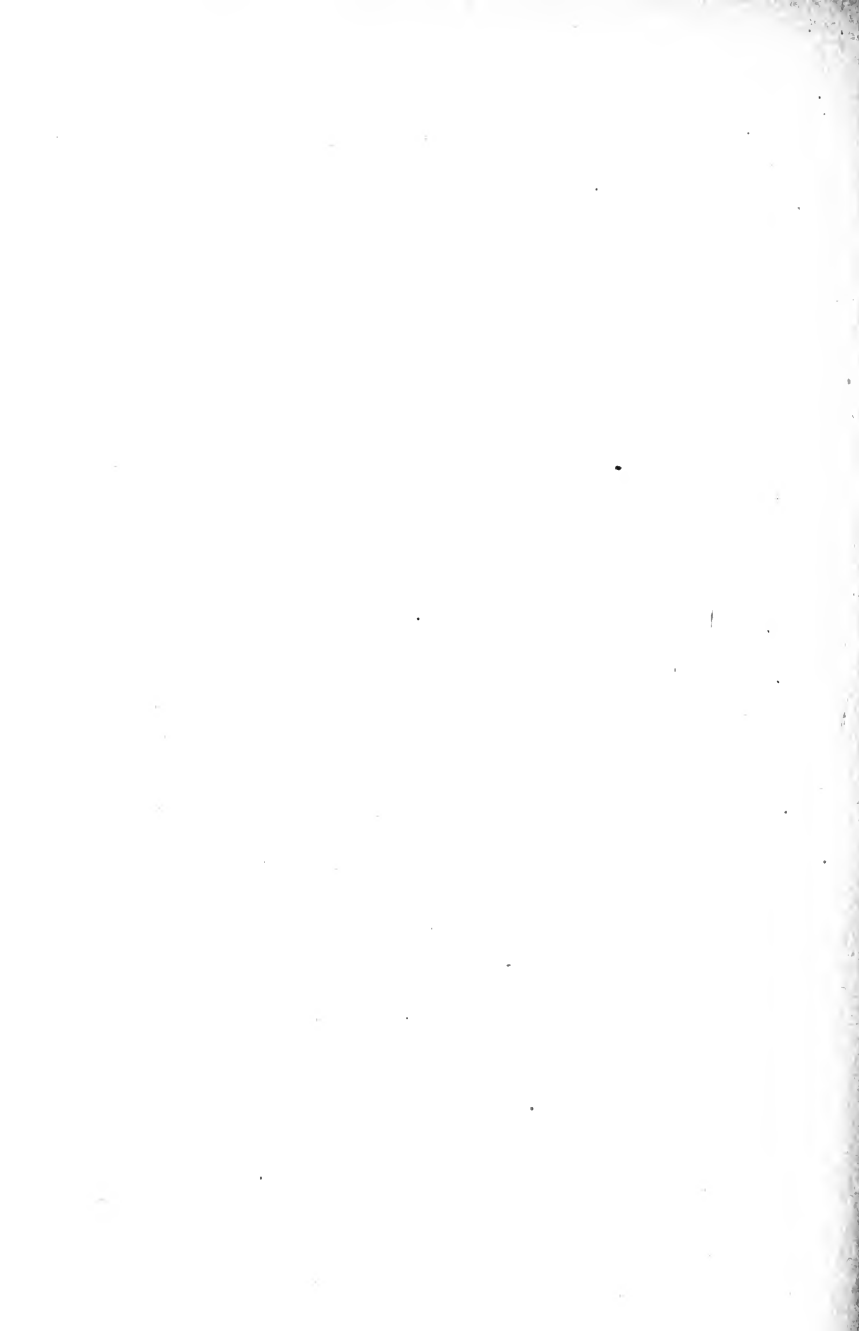
Grasped tight in the great Hand that hurled the suns
Clear to their goals in space, we two are hurled
Out in the ether, out in the abyss,
Till self is lost and whirled
Round and around like spirits in a storm —
Out where mad chaos blazes into form,
And planets, lightning-shod,
Rush past us with a cry as on they race . . .
Blinded, we know how Moses hid his face
Because he was afraid to look on God.



V

THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE

A SONNET SEQUENCE



THE GUERDON OF DESIRE

O THOU unknown companion of my soul!
I reach my yearning empty arms to thee
Across the baffling dark. Come thou to me
Now when I call, Belovèd, though the whole
Wide universe of suns and seasons roll
Between thy world and mine. What sign shall be
Our spirit seal of ultimate unity,
Is graven deep on Time's unending scroll.

The days are heavy-footed; but I know
Thou wilt not come to me till I can say —
Though dizzy with pent passion's overflow:
"O God of Love, if that should be the way
Thy servant needs must travel, I will go
Unloved and lonely even to my death day!"

THE MYSTIC HILL

NAY, friend, I am not sad, but very still,
Waiting the word of Life that shall unbind
The fetters of my soul. For I shall find
Some day a pathway up the mystic hill
Where Beauty walks with Love, where dawns fulfil
The dreams of midnight, and the half divined
Wonder unveils its face, and every wind
With perfume of pure faith is all athrill.

And one will dwell with me in that high place
Who gazes toward it from the other side,
Even as I to-day, guarding the vase
For the immaculate rose, whose petals hide
The golden heart of mystery and grace,
The promise of the Spirit and the Bride.

THE BRIDEGROOM

I wait for you, Belovèd, even as they,
The virgins of the Gospel, through the night
Waited with lamps all trimmed and burning bright
The coming of the bridegroom. For the day
And hour I know not, nor by what strange way
Your feet may travel. Will you bear a light
Shining far off, like fame? And at the sight
Will my small lamp respond with lengthening ray?

Or will you come in silence through the dark,
Unknown to all but me? The loftiest soul
Shuns glory sometimes as the heavenly lark
Loves not the noise of trumpets. I console
My waiting heart with song — but always mark
The measure of oil in my lamp's golden bowl.

THE MYSTIC MESSENGER

WHY do you come to me by night, by day,
O ether wandering wraith? I would forget
The vision of your haunting eyes, and yet —
I dare not bid you either go or stay,
For fear of Love offending! In the grey
Austerity of dawn my lids are wet
With tears that are not grief's, then pale regret
Murmurs one warning word, and fades away.

What mystic message has your soul for mine,
Beyond the reach of language or of thought?
What jewel from the spirit's guarded mine
To crown me has your brooding presence brought?
Beware, fond wraith! The world is bold, malign,
And joys to bring such lovely dreams to naught!

OUT OF THE MAZE

Out of the world's inextricable maze
You came and stood beside me; and I knew —
After our long first look — that it was you
For whom the watch-fires of my soul did blaze
Their beacon through the darkness. Many days
And many tears our faith must battle through,
Before the orb of peace will rise in view,
Blessing the union of our separate ways.

But in the joy of knowing that you are,
My soul is strong to dare the long ascent
To the great light, serene and confident
That we shall reach Love's temple, though afar:
That we shall take Love's mystic sacrament,
And shriven stand before Life's judgment bar.

RECOGNITION

WHEN we came face to face that star-set night
Of miracle, my wondering spirit knew
The purpose of its unity with you,
Sealed by some strange, vaguely remembered rite
In unrecorded ages. A white light
Hid in your shadow. The caressing dew
That lies upon the rose the still night through,
Is less refreshing than that first quick sight
To my awakened vision. I could see
God's beauty shining through you, as a veil.
Your voice was fraught with messages for me
From the vast virgin Silence; and the frail
Glass of my life trembled with ecstasy,
As though it touched the rim of the Holy Grail.

THE SPELL

THE spell that draws my startled soul to thine
Seems to be sounded from a secret place
A million leagues above the world in space,
Seems to be answered with the countersign
A million leagues below. What vast design,
Beyond our need to understand or trace,
Brought us from dual darkness face to face
In the great light, fusing thy dreams with mine?

And oh, what tragic purpose of the stars
Denied to us the guerdon and the faith,
Giving the yearning only and the prayer,—
The word we whisper through the iron bars
Of absence to Love's melancholy wraith,
Kissing the avid mouth that is not there!

ALTER EGO

IN some strange way I do not understand,
You seem to be another self of mine
Newly discovered. At the hidden shrine
Where none save me has ever made demand
I found you worshipping, and hand to hand
You met my challenge with the countersign.
What magic weaver did our ways entwine,
In what long dead and unremembered land?

And when I sang to you my secret song,
The yearning heart-cry only known to me,
At the first note you joined the melody,
Bass to my treble, confident and strong,
And firmly touched the one elusive key
In that grand chord that I had sought so long.

THE HOROSCOPE

O RADIANT angel of my ruling star!
Read me the story of the horoscope
That sent this lover, for I darkly grope
Before the secrets of thy calendar.
Thou knowest all things: Tell me, is it far,
The day that wears my diadem of hope,
When I shall know Love's plenitude and scope,
And all his hidden wonders as they are?

How blinded are we mortals by our birth! —
How poor! — how powerless in our joy or sorrow
The capital of Destiny to borrow,
Whatever wealth our future may be worth!
Though I should give the glory of the earth,
I could not buy one whisper of to-morrow!

THE DREAM

I DREAMED last night you were a little child,
A man-child that I nourished at my breast;
Dreamed that your mouth — which never yet possessed
Even my mouth — drank of me in that wild
And intimate nature-need. Divinely mild,
They say of motherhood? Ah, no; but blest
Beyond all peace that exquisite unrest,
Drawing my life to yours, dream-child, man-child!

I have been still with wonder all day long.
The nameless thrill that only women feel
Yearns in my bosom yet, so passion-strong
Were your dream-lips, so poignant the appeal.
And all my world is signed with your sweet seal,
And all my veins are tremulous with song.

THE AVOWAL

I THINK God, when the river of live stars
Flowed glittering from His fingers, must have known
A joy like mine when, in your deep man-tone,
You breathed the words, "I love you!" Flaming Mars
Watched in the West, and Saturn's golden bars
Guarded us from the world. We two alone
In that full-peopled solitude, had flown
Beyond the reckoning of man's calendars,

And stood at time's beginning. You and I!
Why, there was nothing else between the sea
And God's far footstool in the Pleiades!
"I love you!" With that strong, ecstatic cry,
You opened Faith's wide temple doors for me,
And brought my startled spirit to its knees.

CONSUMMATION

Look in mine eyes, Belovèd! Is it true
That you and I have found each other now?
And when I smooth the dear hair from your brow,
Do I touch you, and not the shadow of you
That I have known in dreams the slow years through?
My soul made long ago its maiden vow
Before no other than its mate to bow
In spiritual submission; for it knew —
Belovèd brother of the Inner Shrine! —
That in the long procession of the years,
Slow, weighted down with destiny's arrears,
One laurel-crowned would bring me what was mine.
Now I will melt the pearl that was my tears,
And pledge you in Love's sweet and bitter wine.

LOVE'S FEARLESSNESS

Love comes to me with nothing in his hand,
And in his eyes promise of many tears.
Between our yearning lives the gulf of years
Yawns emptily — and never to be spanned!
Our feet are deep in the uncertain sand
Of the world's ways, its noise is in our ears;
The future, lying in wait, is big with fears
And prophecies we cannot understand.

Yet bravely have we pledged Love, eye to eye,
Challenging Fate to do her worst with us.
And though the murky clouds are ominous,
Broad wing to wing, our spirits dare the sky,
Seeking in faith to find that marvellous
Ethereal temple where Love's jewels lie.

THE WINDS OF FATE

WHAT mighty wind from Fate's unfathomed seas
Has blown our flame-winged spirits to this height
Outside of space and time? The blinding light
Which dazzles us — whence comes it? and this breeze —
Sweet with mysterious fragrance, that so frees
Our souls from little rules of wrong and right,
From what rose-bowers of interstellar night,
Love, does it come so fraught with prophecies?

I guess God's purpose; but I dare not pray,
Lest He should change it, as my punishment
For being over-bold. So let us wait
Here between earth and sky, till He shall say
Loud in our ears the wonder that He meant
In leaving us alone with brooding Fate.

THE MOON PATH

LAST night the moon made over the dark sea
A path of gold so real, that had I laid
My hand in thine, and had not been afraid,
We might have walked together, firm and free,
Out of this hollow world of phantasy,
And crossed the threshold of God's house, and made
Our home among the angels. . . . Now, dismayed,
Love, I can only stand and gaze at thee.

The path is gone, the moon is gone, and I —
I too shall soon be with remembered things
That tear the heart with yearning. When the
moon
Lays next that golden pathway to the sky,
I shall have hidden my tears in God's wide wings,
And thou wilt hear alone the sea's sad croon.

THE FOG

GREY as the tangled locks of haggard Fate,
And wet as the midnight pillow of a nun.
Whose chaste and pallid bridegroom with the sun
Vanished at evening, the disconsolate,
Mad fog envelops us. The sea's long hate
Is in the siren's screech, and one by one
The wan waves hiss behind us, and we run
With blinded eyes toward an unseen gate.

God answers man by symbols. When he laid
This veil of mysteries in our ship's wide way,
He meant that we should read and understand.
Why, even God, with his great cavalcade
Of keen, detective angels, cannot say
Whether our goal be Love's unbounded land!

THE GIFT OF PAIN

I PITY happy lovers, who have found
No rocks across their pathway. They will go
Down to the dust like little flowers that blow
In dull domestic gardens, and Life's ground
Will be no richer for them. We, soul-bound
By the world's rusty chains, hurled to and fro —
The playthings of the elements, we know
What beauty hides in pain's last dark profound.

And if to-morrow this vast pyramid
Of grief should crumble, and joy's tender green
Sprout in our desert, could our hearts unlearn
Their turned-down page of sorrow? God forbid!
Should we not oft, remembering, stand and lean
Together toward these flames that sear and burn?

THE THEFT

BETWEEN your burning body and your soul,
How quick the choice that I would leap to make,
Were choice demanded of me! I would take
One last look in your eyes, and seek the goal
Where fleshless spectres gather round Life's bowl,
Invisible, intangible; would slake
My thirst of passion only with love's ache,
Rather than yield your spirit. When Fate stole
The gem from my betrothal ring, she left
Its pearly radiance with me, and I live
Now only for the light that it can give —
I who of all sad souls am most bereft.
Be sure God's justice, deep, compensative,
Will pay our spirits for this body's theft.

THE QUESTIONER

I QUESTION the cold stars that answer not;
I ask of the deep sea that hugged so long
Our secret to her bosom; even my song
With queries have I challenged, for my thought
Burns with the passion to unsnarl this knot
Wherein our lives are tangled. Pallid wrong,
And right, whose beauty lies in being strong,
These, too, with riddles has my soul besought.

And still the answer waits. Now will I call
Loud to your soul, Belovèd, with my soul
Across the leagues of distance. Only you
Are high enough to gaze above this wall,
And learned enough to read this hidden scroll
Whose symbols spell the true and the untrue.

THE ANSWER

You are God's answer to me in the dark.
Blind in the human wilderness I sought
The road of my redemption, and I wrought
A chain of devious footsteps. But one spark
Fell from my star's cold lantern for a mark
Of divination, and I doubted not.
And one spring day the desert river brought
A boat, whose music lured me to embark.

Down from the prow you came and took my hand,
Drawing aside the veil that blinded me —
The veil of old illusions. Now I see
Clearly the land I leave, and understand
Even illusion's purpose. Fearlessly
I sail with you to the undiscovered land.

LOVE MADNESS

If this be madness, God, I would not draw
Ever the curtains of weak sanity
Between me and Life's face. When I am free
Under the aegis of Love's ancient law,
Why should I choose the shackles and the straw
Of common life, or bend the subject knee
To dull, plebeian wisdom? Let me be
Mad with the gods awhile, mad with the awe
And wonder of this magic, which has made
Of one man's word the measure of all truth,
Of one man's eyes the vast starred firmament;
And in the closure of his hand has laid
The dew-wet roses of immortal youth,
And the bread and wine of Love's great sacrament.

THE VOYAGE

FEARLESS of life and challenging the Fates,
With you I venture in this fragile bark
To cross the waters of the perilous dark
Beyond desire's attainment. What word waits
For us in the great calm that separates
The known from the unknown? What symbols mark
The star-scroll of the great Mysteriarch
As he our destined way premeditates?

This voyage, Dear, eludes all prophecy,
And we will whisper neither vow nor prayer
As we embark. Love's promised land, maybe,
Beyond the reach of pity or despair,
Will be the harbour of our souls that dare
The waves of this unfathomable sea.

THE MOMENT

THOUGH to the gods our lives may be supreme
When rounded unto death, and though some dear
Remembered joy may jewel some lost year
Until pure gold its very shadows seem;
Yet this one moment when we grasp our dream —
The spirit-fusing moment that is here,
Is the reflecting surface of a sphere
Complete and isolate in Time's full stream.

I need no future, Love, beyond this mark
Upon the disc of ages, for I hold
Eternity within my arms, and hark
To hear Time's clock strike twelve. The word is told
That I have listened for so long in the dark,
And all Love's mystic parchment is unrolled.

LOVE'S HOUR OF SILENCE

IN this the tenderest of all Love's hours,
When soul to soul unquestioning we lie
Against the silence, and Life's flood rolls by,
Red with the petals of his ravished flowers,
Stirring within my breast I feel strange powers
Before unknown; and burning in thine eye
I read new purposes, that amplify
Into all time these little lives of ours.

This is the test that lesser lovers fear —
This unveiled hour when the free heart lies bare
Before its brother. And our spirits dare
To breathe together this high atmosphere!
Give me again thine eyes, that we may share
The intimate stillness — nearer and more near.

PLENITUDE

So long have I desired thee, and so deep
My heart's hid spring, whose waters sung thy name
Over and over till the restless flame
Of Life stood still to listen, that I weep
Now when I have thee in my arms, to keep
Forever. My Belovèd, I became
So perfected in thee, I have no aim
Beyond thee, and no harvests more to reap!

So still is all the world, I feel afraid!
Is this that mystic silence, by whose power
The waiting spirits of the void are made
In mortal mould? I feel my bridal bower
Transcendently enlarged, myself — dismayed —
A dazed intruder on God's working hour.

THE INSCRIPTION

SEALED with the seal of Life, thy soul and mine
Are one this day, and we have graven our date
Of recognition on Time's ponderous gate,
Staining the letters deep with love-spilled wine.
Neither the fire of death nor the strong brine
Of the world's waters can obliterate
That record, and the steady hand of Fate
Under the words has drawn a strange design.

They are an incantation, justified
Upon our lips by the incarnate Breath.
The measure of their potency is wide
As the world's orbit; for God promiseth
Unto all love-inscriptions that abide,
Power and dominion over life and death.

CONSECRATED

SINCE yesterday's communion when I saw
Love's consecrating presence in your eyes,
The world's familiar ways seem otherwise
Than I have ever known them. Hushed with awe,
I contemplate some common little law
Of evolving life; I tremble with surprise
At new, undreamed-of beauties that arise
To fill the place of many an ancient flaw.

And every one I meet along the way
Turns round to gaze with eager questioning
Into my face. Belovèd, do I bring
Some wordless message for the world to-day,
From that love-hallowed garden where we lay
One golden hour beside God's living spring?

DUALITY

ART thou that Love who came with touch of fire
But yesterday, in whose impelling eyes
Smouldered the avid flame that terrifies
The angels by its vision of desire
Unutterable? To-day the seraph choir
Holds not a face that worship glorifies
Like to thy face. Its beauty prophesies
Fulfilment to all spirits that aspire.

Thou art the dual mystery of the soul,
O human Love! Standing with buried feet
In the rose-dust of earth, sodden and sweet,
Thou reachest yearningly to thy far goal
Beyond the zenith, while thine aureole
Flames gold and red where dust and spirit meet.

THE MIRACLE

AMONG the hills and valleys of the soul,
Working his miracles, Love came to me
And touched my blinded eyes and bade me see.
I watch the water redden in the bowl,
I drink the marriage wine. Upon the scroll
Of Life I trace the Word of prophecy
In flaming letters; my mortality
Burns on this altar as a living coal.

Many of Love's disciples have pursued
His wandering steps with worldly dreams and wishes;
Many have climbed, as for a festival,
The mountain where he feeds the multitude.
For them the counting of the loaves and fishes,
For me — the wonder of the miracle!

IN LOVE'S EYES

THINE eyes are magic mirrors, where I see
My own reflected in some marvellous wise
Beyond man's knowledge; and long thoughts arise,
Questioning this familiar mystery.
I feel the dual souls of thee and me
Mirror each other, even as our eyes,
Whose mutual, clear reflection verifies
On earth our vision of Love's unity.

In our souls, too, I feel the kindred souls
Of all mankind reflected, by the light
Of my strong racial faith. Oh, that their sight
Could quicken to that dream! For Love unrolls
Wide vistas for us when our eyes unite —
Seeking his unimaginable goals.

THE THRUSH

O WAKEN, Love, and listen to the thrush,
That sings us back into the world again
After our night in heaven! How his chain
Of golden notes is clasped by that brief hush —
That pearl of thrilling silence, till the rush
Of his own feeling spills his notes like rain
Upon the breast of Dawn! This bird has lain,
Like us, against Night's cheek, and feels it flush
Now with the sun's warm nearness.— Love of mine,
We too have found that pearl of silent peace
Between two chains of joy, each like a trill
Of this inspired bird. . . . Listen! 'Tis a sign
From the angels left in Dreamland, to increase
Our faith that they can find us when they will.

A VISION

SEEN through the dusky foliage of my hair,
Your face is shimmering with that mystic light
Which bathes the spellbound earth on some rare night
In summer after sunset. Spirits there
Hide and reveal themselves, shyly aware
Of their own beauty. Wonder and delight,
Like starbeams, flit before me, and excite
My vision till its ecstasy is prayer.

Are other mortals given in Love's arms
Ethereal revelations like to mine?
Surely the gods withhold not the great boon
Ungenerously, nor blind with wizard charms
The eyes of those on whose indifference shine
The passionate stars and rapture-dazzled moon.

THE MYSTIC ROSE

I, WOMAN, am that wonder-breathing rose
That blossoms in the garden of the King.
In all the world there is no lovelier thing,
And the learned stars no secret can disclose
Deeper than mine — that almost no one knows.
The perfume of my petals in the spring
Is inspiration to all bards that sing
Of love, the spirit's lyric unrepouse.

Under my veil is hid the mystery
Of unaccomplished æons, and my breath
The Master-Lover's life replenisheth.
The mortal garment that is worn by me
The loom of Time renews continually;
And when I die — the universe knows death.

INDIRECTION

You marvel at the beauty that I see
In every line and loving curve of you,
As if a triumphing archangel blew
On the dull coals of earth's reality,
Until they blaze so high with ecstasy
That God looks down and wonders. But I drew
Love's veil for other reasons, and I knew
The human joys through heart's intensity.

They who pursue Love's pleasures only find
An empty goblet at the journey's goal;
But Love's grail-pilgrim, with his different aim,
Opens the very door they grope behind.
Because I sought the temple of Love's soul,
I have become the very altar flame.

AURORA BOREALIS

EVEN as the glory of the northern lights
On some still winter midnight strikes the soul
Spellbound with visions, and the boreal pole
Seems like a flaming ladder that unites
Heaven and earth; so, Love, thy beauty smites
My spirit dumb with wonder, and the whole
Sky of my life burns with the aureole
Of your bright being blazing on the heights.

Stranger is Love, more fraught with mystery
Than yon weird pageant in the northern sky.
'Twas the lone midnight of my destiny
When through the void you came to glorify
With light the cold, dark firmament of me . . .
Yea, and I know not whence you came, nor why!

THE BODY

O TALL white lily with thy dark roots held
And hidden by the ministering mire!
Thy petals are the luminous attire
Of the indwelling Spirit, that compelled
Its flame to mix with earth, and paralleled
The light with darkness. Blossom of cold fire,
Beautiful form, yearning with blind desire,
Now to the dust, now to the stars impelled!

Oh, why will man debase thee in his thought!
Thou art so fair, so pure, so undefiled,—
A wandering angel from the skies exiled
For thy seditious sweetness. . . . What power wrought
Of dust this lily flower — unreconciled
As yet with man, who understands it not?

ASLEEP

BEYOND the boundaries of dream he lies,
Wrapt in the veil of immemorial Sleep.
The far-off murmur of the rhythmic deep
Of Being is his breath; it magnifies
My soul that studies with illumined eyes
This ageless mystery that mortals keep.
Spellbound I watch, too quiet now to weep;
My ears have caught the silence of the wise.

O Sleep, pale prophet of immortal rest —
Sleep that relieves the angel of the clod!
Rocked on the waves of dream that manifest
The Spirit to the seed within the sod,
The slumberer sees the shadow of his quest,
And wakens, wondering at the ways of God.

THE INDWELLING MYSTERY

SOMETIMES when you have held me to your breast,
A mystic interfusion there has been
Through all our woven beings. I have seen
Our separate atoms on some secret quest
Quiver into each other, and then rest
In ecstasy of union; while between
Our minds was only Life's transparent screen —
The real magician's long-sought alkahest.

Little we know — we dull, dust-blinded ones —
The mysteries of the spirit and the clay!
Along your kiss — your lightest touch — there runs
The mute electric word the stars obey;
And the same power that moves those whirling suns,
Vibrates in every love word that you say.

AT THE SUMMIT

OH, it were worth the toiling all the way
Up the steep mountain on whose rocks man dies,
Only to look in another being's eyes
Once, as I gaze in yours day after day!
Below us in the valley all is grey;
Above the deep love-river the fog lies,
And through it groping spirits in disguise
Peer at each other with a veiled dismay.

'Twas there we met, bewildered, face to face;
There we joined hands, beginning the long ascent
Of that divine acclivity, whose base
Is mortised in Creation's fundament,
And whose unmeasured summit marks the place
Of Love's last unimaginable event.

THE GUEST

An hour ago the world was dull and grey,
And my lone heart, a prisoner in my breast,
Beat at the iron doors of Fate, oppress'd
By its own heaviness. Now the glad day
Laughs at the window, and the minutes play
Lightly with one another; for a guest —
Great Love himself — has entered in and blest
My heart's house in his own amazing way.

His lovely hand laid softly on my hair
Is like the Muse's touch; and looking up,
I read within his eyes the long-sought word
That rounds my life's great lyric. . . . Shall I
dare? . . .
Yea, in my new-found strength, I lift Love's cup,
That sacred cup by God administered.

THE WATCHER

WHEN I awake from Love's contented sleep,
And see thee, sleepless, bending over me
In mystical and brooding ecstasy,
Then do I know thy love to be more deep
Than all thy words have said. Then could I weep
With very awe and wonderment in thee.
Through the night hours, in hushed solemnity,
Thy soul and Love a secret vigil keep.

Fearful is Love lest any step surprise
The temple of his worship. He would hide
The altar his white flowers have glorified
From every gaze but God's. O Love, thine eyes!
Their self-abandonment has made me wise
In hidden knowledge where men's souls abide.

IN THE DAWN-CHAMBER

DEAR, you have spoiled all other men for me,
And made them alien to my happiness.
You have discovered an unknown recess
In Love's great house of storied masonry.
There from the window's wide expectancy
We watch the Dawn's rose-dimpled hands caress
The shadowed hills — Dawn the high priestess,
That calls the rolling world continually.

The other rooms in Love's house are confined
To views of the valley, and the walls adorning
Are mottoes of uncertainty and warning —
The thousand reservations of the mind.
'Tis only in this chamber that I find
The outlook on the hills and on the morning.

WHY

You ask me why my heart so fondly clings
Around your heart of love. . . . Is it because
High deeds of yours have won the world's applause?
Is it that your inspired imaginings
Have stirred to wilder flight my lyric wings?
Or is it that your yearning passion draws
Blindly my own, by Love's mysterious laws?
Nay, Dear, not any of these perfect things.

Why do I love you, then? Because of this:
My soul discovered, when our days were new,
That a high guest in your soul's chamber lies;
And sometimes, in the rapture of your kiss,
That angel sleeper — the immortal You —
A moment wakes and looks me in the eyes.

THE GENTLE ONE

No one would ever know from your calm face
How more than human-sweet you are! There lies,
Maybe, a dreamy something in your eyes —
A promise, like the perfume round a place
Where roses bloom; and though all eyes may trace
Your mouth's love-moulded lines, none would surmise
The mother-tenderness that sanctifies
The man's need in your soul-diffused embrace.

O hands, whose touch holds all the gentleness
Of brooding dove-wings in the mellow night!
O mouth of blood-warm rose leaves, whose caress
Quivers through me in waves of vibrant light!
Ye are as potent as the yearning Spring,
That stirs the earth to lyric blossoming.

CARESSES

THE sweet caresses that I give to you
Are but the perfume of the Rose of Love,
The colour and the witchery thereof,
And not the Rose itself. Each is a clue
Merely, whereby to seek the hidden, true,
Substantial blossom. Like the Jordan dove,
A kiss is but a symbol from above —
An emblem the Reality shines through.

The Rose of Love is ever unrevealed
In all its beauty, for the sight of it
Were perilous to the purpose of the world.
The hand of Life has cautiously concealed
The pollen-chambers of the infinite
Flower, and its petals only half uncurled.

FULFILMENT

I AM so empty and so incomplete,
Save when your lips on my lips realise
For me my own fulfilment. Life denies
Its own abundance save when two lives meet.
Within your arms is all I know of sweet,
And all I need of heaven. When I rise
From your embrace, I feel a vague surprise —
A sundering from my forehead to my feet.

You are the key of every kind event,
You open all the doors of joy to me.
Your being and my being, interblent
As the sea and the saltness of the sea,
Are one inevitable element
In the great crucible of Destiny.

THE STORM-LORD

O SOVEREIGN of the storm! Thy breath to me —
Vivid with lightning, vibrant with the sound
Of that original Word that hurled the round
Of stars and suns — is intimate and free
As my own soul. I care not though for thee
My unripe fruit is fallen on the ground,
And all my tender little leaves are drowned.
Life must renew itself in death's dark sea.

Lover supreme! Imperious lord of storm!
To be with thee my soul all fear denies.
And as the ardent earth's desires turn warm
To meet the lightning triumphing down the skies,
So to thy passion my responding form
Thrills with the flame that melts and glorifies.

THE CUP

THE golden Jemshid, so the Persians say,
Possessed a magic cup with seven rings
That — filled with wine — reflected myriad things:
The secrets of the seven worlds that sway
Between the voids, their morrow, their to-day,
Their yesterday; and the imaginings
Of every soul that sorrows, dreams or sings,
From dim creation's dawn to the last day.

Thy body, my Belovèd, is for me
That magic cup; my love is the red wine.
In thee the wonders of the worlds are mine,
The secrets of the stars and of the sea,
The avid prayers of every alien shrine.
All Jemshid's cup revealed, I find in thee.

THE SANCTUARY

Our forms, Belovèd, lie in faith's white bed.
Lavender-fragrant linen covers them,
And underneath is a robe whose broidered hem
Was sewn by the great Spinner's measured thread.
A red rose guards their feet, and at their head
A tall white lily leans upon a stem
Whose roots are in that deathless anadem
Which bound Love's brows when he and Life were wed.

The wavering flame of one lone candle gives
Their image to the shadows; and they seem
As in a midnight chapel, fugitives
Before the altar light's ideal stream.
Love, through this veil of Beauty all that lives
In every world is softened to a dream.

LOVE'S AVATARS

Love, in what alcove of eternity
Have thou and I this marvel found before —
This glamour of desire that quivers o'er
Our bodies and our souls with certainty
Of the supreme attainment? Where were we
Wound in this vine the ages now restore?
Where did I drain the cup that evermore
Will fill my veins with ecstasy in thee?

The shadows of thy leaf-brown hair have been
The veil of many bygone dreams of mine;
And thy deep eyes, that mine are mirrored in,
Are filled with memories and wondershine.
Ay, every door of love to which we win,
We open by some ancient countersign.

CREATION

HIDDEN in thee abounding wonders lie,
And wait to be made visible by me;
For through the medium of our unity
We touch that reservoir of world-supply
Where rest the forms, for Love to magnify,
Of all the houseless souls that are to be,
Tenuous, waiting in eternity
To live, to love, to suffer and to die.

The arch-creative mission is Love's own —
Moulder of substance! kindler of the mind!
Call of the spirit! And while one alone
May compass knowledge, in the Self enshrined,
Only the lover in his joy has known
Origination after his own kind.

LOVE'S INFINITY

THOUGH I have given all my love to thee,
Abundance measureless remains behind.
Freely I give, for thou wilt never find
A barrier to my soul's infinity
Of tenderness or passion. Canst thou see
The outposts of the void, the bournes that bind
The star-mote's journey and the will of the wind?
They are no farther than the marge of me!

Boundless I am as the star-dancing deep
Reflected in this bubble that is I.
Gaze till thine eyes are weary, and then sleep
Within the bosom of the mirrored sky.
Love has no limit that I need to keep,
Love has no terror that I need to fly.

THE SEAL

THE lips of my pure Love have set their seal
Upon the hidden chamber of my soul,
And all my being's house yields him control —
Even my haughty self. Yet his appeal
Is to be servitor! I saw him kneel
Here at my feet, as at some sacred goal;
As a knight of old before that mystic bowl
Whose ultimate beauty earth may not reveal.

I lay my soul fearlessly in his hands.

O gift that in the giving glorifies
Me more than the gold crowns of many lands!

Be thou to him the rose of paradise. . . .
Only the rapt ecstatic understands
The lore of Love, or looks Love in the eyes.

REALISATION

THROUGH all the pageant of the restless years,
Peopled by many shadows, I have known
One vision the world's phantoms leave alone,
One dream whose beauty dries the midnight tears
Of loveless desolation. It appears
Ever the same — a soul blent with my own
As two harmonious lute-strings in one tone,
As the earth's man-divided hemispheres.

Belovèd, when you came to me I knew
You mine, yet — so uncertain does life seem —
I did not realise that I held in you
The hemisphere, the lute-string and the dream
To perfect me, until we slowly grew
One world, one tone, one vision of the Supreme.

THE PRICE OF LOVE

HEAVY the price that I have paid for thee,
Strange Love, in whose unfathomable eyes
The radiant God has veiled in thin disguise
The full reflection of His majesty,
That else were unendurable to me
By sheer excess of light. But I am wise
For every bauble that I sacrifice
On the high altar of thy mystery.

Nothing is had for nothing, and I know
How trivial is the price that I have paid.
It is a fabulous bargain I have made
With the blind traders of the world; and so
I set Love's jewel on my brow, and go
Into the blessed stillness, unafraid.

LOVE'S MYSTIC JEWEL

WHAT is the merit of our souls that we
Should find this treasure all mankind have sought,
And died in seeking? Other souls have brought
As pure a purpose — failing utterly.
Was it our faith which won for thee and me
The substance that we hoped for? Sages taught
Aeons ago that everything was naught
Beside this jewel of strange potency.

Hope trembles at his shadow on the ground;
The weary world labours for glittering spoils
That turn to ashes, and all lovers sigh.
But thou and I, Belovèd, we have found
In Time's wild ocean after many toils,
That perfect pearl for which the world would die.

CONFESSION

YEA, Dear, lay bare thy lovely soul, nor fear
That any wraith of shame can enter in
This guarded house of faith, nor any sin
Darken for me Love's mirror, crystal-clear
For all thy revelations. Thou art peer
Now of Love's lofty ones, whose heights begin
Always in humbleness, and thou shalt win
A pearl of rapture for thine every tear.

My love is reverent as the virgin prayer
Whose power the gate of paradise unbars;
My love is tender as the ecstasy
Of the young mother as she grows aware;
And full of understanding as the stars
That shone in wonder over Galilee.

THE PAST

HAD I the power to wipe away the past,
That past replete with love and joy and pain
In which thou hadst no portion; could again
My Book of Life be opened, and my vast
Experience be shattered by a blast
Of God's great trumpet,— I would still ordain
Those ways that are accomplished, and remain
Myself, for good or evil, to the last.

For every throb of love has been to me
A promise of thy coming; every thrill
Of joy a prophecy thou shalt fulfil,
And every pang of pain an ecstasy
Of growing knowledge. But, O Love, there still
Are infinite deeps to be revealed by thee!

THE COVENANTERS

I WONDER, Love, how you and I did live
Before we found, each in the other's eyes,
This covenant of faith that justifies
Our souls' desires! Homeless and fugitive
Before those earthly ministers who give
Only to common minds the master's prize,
We have eluded their world-honoured lies,
That have no place in our true narrative.

How did I live ere you revealed for me
The testament of truth, the tenuous veil
Of unseen beauty, and the verity
Of light's clear word? Tender and human-frail
You are with love, but in your eyes I see
Strange visions of a new and holier grail.

LOVE-SLEEP

YEA, let me sleep among the murmuring leaves
Of the great Tree of Love. Why should I wake?
Even in dreams our wedded spirits make
One light against the darkness. Languor weaves
A veil to cover us, and Night receives
Our beings as a charge for Nature's sake.
Give me thy lips, Belovèd, and then shake
Upon my lids the dews of all Love's eyes.

The Tree of Love is waving to and fro
Upon the winds of midnight, and the sigh
Of dreaming leaves is like a lullaby
Over the brooding earth. Far, far below
A planet whispers, and our low reply
Is lost in the dream-river's overflow.

THE MENACE

WHEN I remember, Love, that but for thee
My homeless spirit still would wander lone,
Alien in this inhospitable zone
Upon the globe of Time; when rapturously
I touch the gleaming jewel of unity —
Whose dual rays are thy soul and my own —
Then do I tremble lest the masked unknown
Brigand of Death snatch thee away from me.

All other perils we can brave together,
Challenging them to part us. But beyond
The shifting boundaries of the realm of breath
Are many dangers and uncertain weather.
Nothing can rend our Nature-woven bond
Save the inexorable caprice of Death.

THE HAND

IN some great school of magic long ago,
I do believe a mighty master taught
Your hand its potent spell, and you have brought
The wonder back to earth. A touch — and lo!
Through all my being dreams and visions flow.
Upon what immemorial loom was wrought
The fabric of this feeling, strong as thought,
And tenuous as the weft of the rainbow?

Your touch is like the benedicite
Of all divine and never-ending things.
Yea, and I feel in every vein of me
The lyric sweetness of a thousand springs,
The stirrings of innumerable wings,
And the wild surge and melody of the sea.

SISTERS

WITHIN your eyes the women you have known
Beckon to me with long white wavering hands
Across the gulfs of time. My spirit stands
Before the mirror of you — not alone,
But blent with strange reflections. There are blown
Here shadows on the winds of many lands,
Fair shapes whose garments brush the shifting sands
Of desert love, where all dead seeds are sown.

Others there are less tenuous, whose lips
Have not forgotten the old ways of speech.
“Sister,” they call me, and the tones beseech;
They beat upon my heart like little whips.
Trembling with timid wistfulness, I reach
Into the void for these weird fellowships.

I LOVE YOU

WHY do I say, "I love you"? I have said
Those words to lesser lovers long ago,
Deluded lovers in the plains below
This pure inviolate height where we were led
For purposes prophetic. I have read
Those words on youth's blank pages, seen them glow
Like lanterns in life's darkness; yet I know
Now they were only forms untenanted.

Love, I compare the ardours of the past
With our high passion, as a bard compares
The music of his first songs with his last;
The little songs, that were but stammered prayers,
With those momentous chants whose power the vast
Organ of Art in thunderous tone declares.

THE CANDLE

Your face, Belovèd, is a pure white flame
Upon the world's high altar. In your eyes
The ascending spirit of the sacrifice
Yearns, in its self-consuming, toward the Name
Blazoned upon the temple. You reclaim
The hopes of long-lost worshippers; they rise
Emboldened for the sacred enterprise
Whose guerdon is beyond the end of fame.

You are the blessèd candle set above
The Book and the sacrament — the light of truth,
Which calls the flaming spirits to aspire,
Shedding its radiance on the blood of love.
O yearning soul of consecrated youth,
My faith would light its taper at your fire!

EXORCISM

LONELY I am to-day and full of doubt,
Questioning Fate, and dallying with Fear,
That vaguely whispers warning in my ear
Of unknown perils, past my finding out;
Until I wonder what 'tis all about —
My pilgrimage on this erratic sphere,
The solitary quest from year to year,
My soul within and all the world without.

And then I hear your footstep on the stair,
And feel the clinging question of your kiss.
O wizard Love! My spectres in despair,
Seeing your face, have fled to the abyss.
How strange it seems that I should ever care
For any cause or purpose beyond this!

TEARS

'Tis not because of any lack in thee,
Belovèd, that I weep, nor any pain
The wisest lover ever could explain
In terms of human sorrow. But I see
In Love's immortal garden a dark tree
Whose name I know not, and the winds complain
Forever through its leaves in lone refrain;
Even the birds avoid it silently.

But I believe if ever I should dare
To lie beneath that tree a whole night long,
That in the morning I should know the song
God sang when Eve was tempted, and the prayer
That made the Galilean pity-strong
In the night-watches when no man was there.

THE IDEAL

I AM as those of whom the Hindoos say,
"A god has kissed them"; for Love came to me —
Ideal Love, that passionate verity
That touches mortals in some swiftening way
And startles them to faith. Aye, day by day
The wonder lives with me, and fearlessly
I gaze into its eyes — O ecstasy
For which the waiting ages thirst and pray!

Guerdon of all the soul's accomplishment!

Thou art a sign for me in the dark place.

Thou art the wide inviolable tent

That hides me from the storm. Thy close embrace

Is what the rapturous earth has always meant

By the vague, haunting beauty of her face.

THE DUAL VISION

SOMETIMES when you are one with me as brain

Is one with thought while prisoned in this dust;

When, blended utterly, our souls adjust

Their dual vision — as the eyes though twain

Are one in seeing; I can scarce restrain

My tears of pity for the souls that must

Go seeking Love in mazes of distrust,

With dreams too unsubstantial to attain.

We who have seized the great Reality,

We who have ravished the affrighted bride

Of human Love — frail Faith — and made her see

The bridegroom's naked beauty, have thrown wide

A door into the Future, where the free

Spirits of Time invisibly abide.

GENESIS

Love, you and I were the original Cell,
Locked in the silence of eternity,
And in the winding arms that were to be
When we should be dissevered. Then the bell
Of Time sounded within us, the rapt spell
Of æons lifted, and the ecstasy
Of sempiternal being, wild and free,
Whirling and swirling, broke our tenuous shell.

And we were flung even to the outer rim
Of the expectant Dark, whose calendars
Called for our coming; and we blazed on him —
The latest of a thousand Avatars.
Your scattered seed became the suns and stars,
And I became the space wherein they swim.

THE TRIANGLE

Come thou, my Lover of the storied past,
And thou, my Lover of the strong to-day.
In each belovèd hand, oh, let me lay
The other's hand in brotherhood at last!
In that high region where I hold you fast —
Though leagues divide us — is a luminous way,
Where walk those all-wise beings who survey
Calmly the deeps where all Love's lies are cast.

Oh, love ye one another! For we near —
A little every day — that master-height
Where none may venture save with unveiled sight;
But where our souls must face the thing we fear,
In one another's eyes without a tear
Beholding Truth, and daring the great light.

LOVE-WRAITH

SOMETIMES, when I am musing all alone,
Into my being flows the sense of thee
In overwhelming fulness, and I see
Thy secret soul's unguarded portals thrown
Open for my soul's entrance to its own.
In such a moment thou art nearer me
Than in my presence — unreservedly
I lift the veil that covers the unknown.

And so I wonder if our parted hours
Have not a purpose neither one perceives;
If kisses and love words are not the leaves
Of Love's tree, and these visions the rare flowers —
Fragrant and pure as the spiritual powers
Our dual-self in solitude achieves.

THE SILENCE OF LOVE

SWEET are the words of Love, but sweeter far
Is Love's initiate silence. When we lie
Between Life's lips, Belovèd, thou and I,
Our rapture-blended beings are a bar
Even to lyric speech. A word might mar
The visions in our spiritual sky,
Where every little bird that flutters by
Is some world-message flying to a star.

In Love's great silence are the timid things
That fear the trumpet of the lord of sound.
They brush against our souls with noiseless wings,
They tremble toward us from the teeming ground.
Some day, in the high stillness that Love brings,
Life's unimagined secret shall be found.

SUMMER-ABSENCE

I WONDER if the trees that beckon thee
To their deep shadows in thy lone retreat
Are tender as my arms; and if the sweet,
Soft, yielding grass clings to thee lovingly
As I in drowsy hours. The ecstasy
That quivers in the ever-moving wheat
Whispers of love to thee, and the strong beat
Of Nature's heart woos thee continually.

Love, we are one, the moving wheat and I,
And the great heart of Nature. When the trees
Beckon to thee, I beckon; when the blades
Of grass caress thy fingers as they lie
Entangled with them, I am even in these;
And I am hiding in the twilight shades.

THE CLOCK

BEFORE the hour when thou wilt come to me,
Oh, with what laggard and deliberate pace
The minute-hand moves up the clock's white face!
Even desire is powerless to foresee
Its goal, meridian-pointing. Destiny
May but have wound her clock within an ace
Of the last notch, and by that little space
Silence may enter here — instead of thee.

The tick-tick is thy footsteps on the way,
Heard by my listening heart; and the hour-chime
Will be our old Earth-Mother's evening song,
Seeing her children happy. . . . Do not stay
Thy numbered steps, O Love-retarding Time!
Joy is so brief, and eternity so long!

THE SEA OF LOVE

Your love is like the ever-moving sea,
That changes not and yet is always new.
I bathe my spirit on the shores of you,
And in your deeps divine that mystery
Hid from the world's beginning. Wild and free,
The tempests of your heart are those that blew
Secrets to old Atlantis, and I view
On your horizon lights of destiny.

I would attune my being to the rhyme
Of your recurrent tides. I would embrace
With your soul's waves the shores of every clime,
And with your surface calm reflect the face
Of that illimitable Lord of Time —
The vast star-shining horologue of space.

NATURE-LONGING

To be alone with Nature, you and I
Together in some undiscovered place,
Where we may look kind Silence in the face,
And learn of the wise winds that wander by,
The secret of their healing! Oh, to lie
For hours on Time's broad bosom, with blue space
Laid on us like a garment! To embrace
The motherly trees, that never will deny
Comfort to their strayed children! Let us find

The road that beckons where the days are green,
The nights a hue our eyes have never seen,
And leaving the world-dissonance behind,
Seek the earth-harmony. Then our dust-blind
Spirits shall learn what their own longings mean.

LOVE'S LYCEUM

SOMETIMES for recreation Love and I
Challenge each other to a game of thought —
A battle of words and meanings, subtly fought
For mutual revelation. And we vie
For vantage points, striving to fortify
Those visioned heights our separate roads have sought.
From Logic's flint our steels have struck and caught
Red, splendid sparks, too luminous to die.

But ere our minds' lamps burn a steady flame,
The flickering light cast on each lover's face
Shows to the other some ecstatic grace,
Too madly sweet for reason. Then the game
Ceases, forgotten, with its brilliant aim —
For we are melted in the flame's embrace.

EPHEMERA

WHAT are the toils and troubles of my days,
But restless gnats that buzz around the ears
Of my soul's musing Sphinx? She only hears
Time's immemorial music, nor obeys
The calls that echo from the tinsel maze
Of transitory care. Pallid with fears,
The mad world plunges down the weary years,
Through arid and unsatisfying ways.

Oh! what to me are these ephemeral things?
They are forgotten when at night I rest,
Love, in that warm eternity — your breast.
Close, close to us the loving Silence clings,
Brooding with wide, immeasurable wings,
Our dream that is the treasure in her nest.

THE OAK

You bend above me as a loving tree
Bends to the tender ivy that is wound
About its mighty body; you surround
My being as the tree's immensity
Surrounds the ivy. Gazing up, I see,
On your aspiring head, dominion crowned
With arch-druidic sign, and in the ground
Your potent roots guard mine perpetually.

Softly, O softly, do my tendrils cling
About you in the breezes! I delight
Even to sway aside and measure your height.
But when the storm, with awful muttering,
Threatens the stillness — then I grasp you tight,
Like any other frail and frightened thing.

UNDER THE SKY

HERE with Love's languorous and abundant ease
Familiar, this entrancing night we lie
In rapt abandon to the naked sky —
Nothing between us and the Pleiades!
Alcyone's great secret might appease
The yearning of our souls, might verify
Their dreams of unity. Do not deny
Its message to our ears, O minstrel breeze!

Love, yield thy spirit to the influence
Of those unbounded spaces overhead.
It was for this we made our bridal bed
In Freedom's roofless mansion. Rising hence,
Our passion sighs, like burning frankincense,
Perfume all stars by lovers tenanted.

THE VIRGIN SHRINE

You pray me, Dear, to find some virgin shrine,
Some sacred place that none has ever known
In my heart's house, where you and I alone
May worship one another. Bread and wine
Wait on an altar where no soul save mine
Has bowed before the Host, with lilies grown
In God's abundant garden. I have sown
Before the door the seeds of the secret vine.

There time is not. To-day and yesterday
Blend with to-morrow and eternity,
Even as our souls will blend if there we pray.
Dare you to enter now and stand with me
In the white stillness? I will show the way,
And in your hand place the prophetic key.

THE CHILD

THE tyrant world denies me, little one,
The joy of building you a mortal frame;
Yet my great Love and I have called the flame
Of your free spirit from the ardent sun
Of God's creative dream. You were begun
At our souls' mystic marriage; and you came
Into our lives, urging your tender claim,
Haunting and tenuous as deeds undone.

And though we never feel your hands in ours,
Nor hear the wonderful sound of your small feet
Over the earth, you breathe for us in flowers;
In our own hearts your tiny pulses beat;
And through the long inviolable hours
Of dream we hold communion high and sweet.

WORDS

WHY do our words divide us like a wall,
And only in the stillness, through the eyes
Or the rapt lips, our spirits in surprise
Rush flaming on each other? When you call
My wraith to you afar, it brings you all
My dumb lips dare not carry. We disguise
The soul with veils of speech — poor soul, that tries
To pour the ocean through a pipe, so small!

Oh, for the courage to endure the flame
Of God's tremendous silence, heart to heart,
On the sheer height where weak words are forgot;
Where faith is all the foothold, and the aim
Only to find the soul its counterpart,
In the white sphere where space and time are not!

THE VEIL

BELOVED, let my dark hair cover thee,
Veiling thy face from my long gazing eyes;
For I am weary as the daylight dies
Into the shadow — the uncertainty
That yearns to hide the world. Be now to me
The undiscovered guerdon, the far prize
That waits the soul's endeavour — till I rise
Eager again to solve the mystery.

As I have hidden thee in my long hair,
So would my passion cover thee with dream
And soul-alluring glamour. Dost thou dare
Always to face my spirit in supreme
And blinding revelation? Oh, beware!
Love's veils are more essential than they seem.

TRUTH

WHEN Pilate questioned Him of Galilee
With, "What is truth?" the Master, we are told,
Said not a word. That story in fine gold
Was graven on Time's rocks for you and me.
Have we not proven truth and falsity
Two faces of one coin, and candour sold
To buy this purer pearl? Deep fold on fold
Grows the immortal rose of verity.

And yet I tremble sometimes in the night
When all the world is still, and in your arms
I listen for the wonder of your breath.
Though round your head shines truth's unwavering light,
My soul this hour is filled with vague alarms,
Lest we have dared that falsehood which is death.

THE CRUEL WORD

WHEN I have said some cruel word to you,
All the night long I feel it burn and smart
Deep in the hidden softness of my heart;
And if perchance I know the word was true,
Then do my vindicating tears pursue
Reason, till it absolves you. As in art,
So even in love is light the counterpart
Always of shadow. Can we blend the two?

That were a twilight grey and passionless,
Wherein the flowers of life would open pale,
And Love grow weary of his own delight.
Better the fiery noon, the fierce caress,
The radiant rose — and then, as countervail,
Tears and the lonely darkness of the night.

JOY OF LOVE

BELOVÈD, when I hear the low complaining
Of little lovers in whose jealous eyes
The weak tears wait, whose souls would agonise
Between the breasts of Aphrodite, chaining
Her freedom with their servitude, and staining
The splendour of her gift with their mean sighs;
When these I hear, and pity, and despise,
How great you loom — the joy of Love maintaining!

Yours is that master sight that sees the sun
Blaze in the nadir on the darkest night.
For you the roses bloom, the rivers run
In icy winter, and the ultimate right
Waits in all wrong. O god-instructed one,
Wise with the wisdom of the world's delight!

ISOLATION

SOMETIMES when I am very close to you
In form and feeling, suddenly a thought
Of our eternal separateness makes naught
Of all our vows, and I am smitten through
With sense of isolation. Is it true,
Belovèd, that the visions we have caught
Of perfect union may be phantoms wrought
Of our own brains, and dyed in their own hue?

When in my very arms you lie asleep,
Your dreams may be a thousand miles away.
I hear your words, but unknown meanings keep
Vigil behind your lips, and when we say,
"Forever, Love!" our listening angels weep,
Gazing at one another in dismay.

ABSORPTION

BELOVÈD, in the still deeps of thine eyes
Absorb my soul, that I may feel no more
This pain of separation! I implore
Thy Self to take me in, and solemnise
My union with thee in some mystic wise.
I would no more be I; but would explore,
As thee, thy soul's dim temple, and adore
Therein, as thee, with secret sacrifice.

Oh, let me die to Self and find rebirth
In some fair body as one breath with thee!
There are no purposes in life for me
But as thy complement; nor any worth
In all the fame and splendour of the earth —
Unless one perfect spirit we may be.

OPULENCE

You are the flowing of Love's opulence
Over the meagre measure of my days,
Whose scattered drops along the world's dry ways
Shall be as wells of beauty. In their tents,
The watchful nomads on life's lone immense
Grey desert call them songs. Who thirsts betrays
His secret need of love, and tribute pays
To you, Belovèd, when his soul assents.

For each drop of this water is a song
That but for you had never taken form
Out of the vapour of silence. Prophecy
Sometimes is mirrored there, and symbols long
Invisible; while mystic visions swarm
Across these fragile spheres of poetry.

AS A THOUSAND YEARS

'Tis said that in the Lord's abiding place
A single day is as a thousand years.
So was that day we spent among the spheres
That roam Love's interspiritual space.
In vision we beheld the eternal Face;
While Time, whose sands are crystallised love-tears,
Sustained them, till the hours were in arrears,
To guard from envious worlds our soul's embrace.

And now that our ecstatic interlude
In Life's discordant song is passed away;
Now Time's depleted hour-glass is renewed,
To measure our reunion's long delay,
These thousand years of pain and solitude
Shall also to that Lord be as one day!

PARTED

LOVE, I have wept thine absence till my eyes
Are heavy with the burden of their tears.
Insistently against my inner ears
The hot, desirous blood knocks, and defies
This cloistral quietude that crucifies
The heart of Love.— O Lord of days and years!
Send back my lover, though it moves the spheres
And hurls the seasons forward in the skies!

Time is my enemy. The laggard days
Mock me with pallid laughter, as they ride
Slowly around the earth. In shame they hide
Their eyes from me, veiling the tell-tale rays
They stole from Love's eyes, for their light betrays
They passed him on the round world's other side.

AUTUMN

CHILL is the night and cheerless. All alone
I linger here under the cedar tree,
Whose deep autumnal murmur dolourously
Blends with the sea's monotonous undertone.
Belovèd, all the summer birds are flown
And all the flowers. The shifting mockery
Of dead leaves covers everything, and thee —
Thee too the autumn covers with her own.

Wilt thou return, Belovèd, with the spring,
When leaves and birds and flowers come back again?
Wilt thou return when mating robins sing
In cedar shades their happy love-refrain?
Or shall I watch each tender natural thing
Return to joy — and watch for thee in vain?

FAITH

O FRIENDLY Faith! Thy cool hands are as white
As moonbeams on the waves they lull to sleep.
Press down my eyelids, that I may not weep,
And hold me close through all this cruel night.
Stay thou with me until, over the height,
The sun of Love arises from the deep —
The unknown ocean of absence. I would keep
Vigil with thee, O Faith! till the daylight.

My Love is sealed with truth, and he is mine —
Mine as my breath, blended and one with me
As my own memories, as inseparably
Fused with my substance as the colour of wine
Is blended with its perfume. Tenderly,
O angel Faith! guard Love's unlighted shrine.

THE LETTER

SILENCE and separation and the ache —
The restless passionate desire to see
One being alone of all humanity!
Why do we banish angels for the sake
Of housing these dull mortals, who would make
Our souls their playtoys! Love, come back to me!
This world is a dream of unreality,
And only in your presence am I awake.

And then they bring your letter. . . . And my world
Suddenly thrills, and is no more a dream,
But quiveringly real. Christ never wrought
Miracle greater than this missive, whirled
Through space from the Hesperides — a gleam
Of the ineffable Light, all wonder-fraught.

LOVE'S WASTED DAYS

I WEARY of the burden of these days,
These heavy days when we are far apart.
No empty winning in the worldly mart
Can ever profit us; no idle praise
Can compensate us for our love's delays.
There come from Life's dark forest where thou art,
Only the echoes of my crying heart —
Thy lone cries borne along the barren ways.

Outside the brooding fold of thine embrace,
The sunbeams burn me and the shades affright.
I am a wind-blown meteor in space,
Robbed of the guidance of thy love's great light.
My life, without the beacon of thy face,
Is wasted on the ways of outer night.

SEPARATE

I AM so lonely and so far from thee!
I clasp and importune the listening air,
Whose tresses touch thy distance; but my prayer
Brings only its own echo back to me.
My soul is sick with the world's tyranny!
What are the wills of men, that they should dare
Intrude themselves between our breasts, and tear
Our spirits from their shrines irreverently?

Defy them, and return to me this day!
For in a little while we shall be dead;
And all the treasures we can take away
Are memories of the love-words we have said,
Shadows of hours together, and the grey
Caressing ghosts of lips that once were red.

ABSENCE

THOU art not here, Belovèd, and the night
Is void and meaningless for want of thee.
There is no fragrance in the flowers for me,
Nor any glamour in the wan moonlight.
I hear no woodland warbler's lyric flight —
Only the cricket, crying mournfully,
And low sobs of the melancholy sea —
Lonely as I, for all her awful might.

O thou who hast all beauty where thou art!
Return and bring it with thee, I implore,
Bring back the world's lost meaning. From before
Thy face all desolation will depart.
Whenever I hear thy footsteps at the door,
The bird of wonder warbles in my heart.

WAITING

O AGONY of waiting! I believe
Life has no burden of penitence or loss
So hard to carry as thy restless cross;
Nor any torment mortal may conceive
So powerless to attain its own reprieve.
The treasures of the scheming world seem dross
And emptiness! I would not go across
My garden all earth's wonders to achieve!

Because, if I should venture from the door,
Should wander down some path a little way,
He would be sure to come this very day,
Though I had waited for him weeks before.
For Fate is watching, eager to betray,
And I should mourn this hour forevermore.

AFTER LONG ABSENCE

THIS is the day — the hour — if all be well,
When my Belovèd will return to me
Out of the world's malign immensity,
Where lurks Disaster, the cold infidel
That envies lovers. Could I but dispel
My fears of some immutable decree
Of the dark Fates, forbidding joy to be,
That will not let Love pass their sentinel!

When he shall come, his presence will restore
Refreshment to the water, the lost light
To the wan moon, and to the restless night
Repose and plenitude forevermore.

Even the homing birds will pause in flight
When I shall hear his footsteps at my door.

THE ABYSM

DAZED with a rapture long deferred, I feel
Afraid to face the sheer immensity —
The wild abysm of my desire for thee.
My woman-heart trembles, and would conceal
The measure of its wealth; but I reveal
Through voice and hands and eyes the ecstasy
That beats at the defenseless doors of me,
Moved by thy love's unutterable appeal.

O bid me go into the wilderness,
Or to the desert regions of the earth,
To be with thee! There would be plenitude
Of beauty for me there, if thy caress
Waited in every shadow, and no dearth
Beside thee in the arid solitude.

INSATIATE

My tremulous, intense desire of thee
Transcends this earthly garment that is thine.
When thy love-graven dust is fused with mine
As fragrance with a flower, there still for me
Are luring, unknown deeps of mystery
To be descended never; and I pine
In mystic passion, for thy soul's dim shrine
Is domed by vistas of Infinity.

Oh, to behold thy spiritual face —
Thy very Self, unveiled of earth's disguise!
When I have wrested from involvèd space
The only unity that satisfies,
And hold thy naked soul in my embrace,
I shall know God, and gaze into His eyes.

BEYONDNESS

BELOVÈD, Time and veiled Eternity
Reach to caress me with your vibrant hands.
The gods of old salute me, and the sands
Of long absorbèd seas return to be
The witness of our footsteps. When I see
Within your eyes the lure of unknown lands
And unknown lives, an ecstasy expands
My being beyond Time's frail boundary.

The measure of the beneath and the above
Is in your hand; your feet are on the ages.
Over your head, visible to the sages,
Hovers the luminous immortal dove;
And on your memory's unapparent pages
Are written all the hidden ways of Love.

MICROPROSOPOS

BEHIND the orient darkness of thine eyes,
The eyes of God interrogate my soul
With whelming love. The luminous waves that roll
Over thy body are His dream. It lies
On thee as the moon-glamour on the skies;
And all around — the yearning aureole
Of His effulgent being — broods the whole
Rapt universe, that our love magnifies.

O thou, through whom for me Infinity
Is manifest! Bitter and salt, thy tears
Are the heart-water of the passionate spheres,
With all their pain. I drink them thirstily!
While in thy smile is realised for me
The flaming joys of archangelic years.

THE TOWER

Your love is like a mighty tower for me,
When I am weary and the world is dark.
From your high battlements my thoughts embark
Upon the tenuous wings of poetry,
Voyaging to the stars. Sovereign and free,
The inter-stellar dreams' great hierarch
Marshals his legions round us, as a mark
In the encircling vast uncertainty.

Steadfast we stand together, you and I,
Untroubled by false visions, unafraid,
Though often menaced by the jagged blade
Of neighbour-lightning. As the clouds go by,
We watch the wraiths of old religions fade
Into that faith which love shall verify.

ACME

THRONED in the purple shadows of thy hair,
Mystery is exalted. In thine eyes
Burns the supreme desire that never dies,
The demiurgic fire whose power I dare
To meet and mix me with. I do not care
Whether the end be gain or sacrifice,—
Only to touch the poetry that lies
Behind the beauty that allures me there!

As wine in water, let me lose in thee
The boundaries of myself. Give me to drink
The cup between thy lips — I will not shrink
Though it be bitter-sweet. Oh, I would be
Intoxicate with love, until I sink
Into the deeps — or rise to ecstasy!

THE SACRAMENT OF LOVE

THE ground whereon we tread is holy ground,
Made sacred by the myriad slow feet
Of Life's successive ministers. We meet
Beside the blessed table where man found
The symbols of his Maker. In the round
Of unremembered suns this bread we eat
Was leavened, and this wine so mortal-sweet
Was crushed from grapes grown beyond Time's grey
bound.

This cup, whereof we drink is verily
The blood of the atonement, and this bread
The very body of Love. These drops were bled
Upon the cross of Life in ecstasy.
O potent sacrament! You seal in me
The link between the unborn and the dead.

WHEN I SHALL LIE IN DEATH

WHEN I shall lie, Belovèd, some dark day
In the unbending dignity of death;
When in my ear Love's potent shibboleth
From your own lips no message shall convey,
Nor bring the well-known answer . . . do not say
That God with me the Void replenisheth!
Though with your breath I do not mix my breath,
Be not too sure that I have gone away.

Your presence will be welcome as of old
Beside the stately bed where I am laid;
And though for the first time you find me cold,
Know 'tis from terror of the waiting spade.
Comfort and warm me in your living hold,
And kiss my face — and do not be afraid.

THE UNSPOKEN

IN the rapt silences between us two
Are Love's last heights ascended. Keenly dear
Are your love-vibrant tones, and when I hear
Your whisper in the dark there trembles through
My soul the star-choir's music. Yet I do
Worship the silence, though sometimes I fear
The too-revealing Presence it brings near —
As if the hand of God touched me and you.

It seems that our two souls in some still place
Pause for a pulseless moment, as if we
Were masters of desire and destiny —
Holding the planets poised in dizzy space.
Look, Love! There in the dark the shining Face!
The God of Silence calls us — it is He.

HIDDEN BEAUTY

IN thy form's magic mirror of desire
Beckons that Beauty hid from mortal sight.
The rhythm that marked the elemental rite
Of Being marks thy heartbeat, and the lyre
Of the great leader of the stellar choir
Is strung with hair like thine. When in the night
Between thy lids I see love's glowing light,
It is for me great Uriel's vigil-fire.

What art thou, to unveil my vision so!
The pangs of the great Mother gave thee birth,
To be a symbol on the alien earth
Of those mysterious powers that spirits know.
I was a pilgrim in a land of dearth;
Thy coming made the corn and lilies grow.

THE PERVADER

BELOVED Light of the celestial deep!

Art Thou not trying to commune with me
Through this dear mortal who so rapturously
Clings to my veil of dust? Always I keep
My tryst with Thee: when up the flaming steep
Of passion's dizzy pinnacle I rise free
One moment from the earth's blind sovereignty;
Or in the lofty solitude of sleep.

Wherever I look — Thou art. Even my bowl
Of wine reflects Thy symbol from the skies;
And, imaged on the mirror of Love's eyes,
Thy meditative eyes regard my soul,
Glowing with love unspeakable — Thou goal
Of this my pilgrimage in human guise!

RECOMPENSE

WHEN I consider all thou givest me
In these miraculous hours I value so—
The vision and the wonder that I know
To be the veils of that Reality
Behind the dreams of earth; and when I see
How with thy tending all my soul-flowers grow,
In very gratitude I would bestow
Some rare incomparable gift on thee.

But when I gaze deep in thy raptured eyes,
And see my own eyes in companioning
Reflection fused with thine, I realise
That in this unity of lives I bring
Some boon beyond my own imagining,
That is thy lonely spirit's long-sought prize.

THE MAN

IMMEASURABLE thy being is to me,
Lord of my fulfilled life! The beauty line
Of the world's orbital ellipse is mine
In one encompassing eye-sweep of thee.
Thy substance holds that secret chemistry
Whereby the earth-dust flames, and is divine;
And woven with thy body is the sign
Of primal, demiurgic mystery.

Without thee is my destiny denied;
Though I stand symbol of the sea of space,
The boundless gestatorium, the bride
Of the Supreme. Only in thine embrace
My small ephemeral life is amplified,
Is blent with the imperishable race.

ILLUMINATION

WHEN my receptive lips are fused with thine
In that pure flame whose fuel is ecstasy,
All of the lost, forgotten poetry
Of unrecorded ages touches mine
With gift of inspiration. Powers divine,
Answering thine ardent summons, move in me.
Measureless days, and wider days to be,
Challenge my hour for the lyric countersign.

Unborn religions burn me in thine eyes;
The devotees of undelivered years
Mirror their visions there, in thy love tears,
And lure my lips to drink them. I am wise
With the deep lore of disembodied seers,
When God breathes over me thy passion sighs.

THE SONG AND THE SINGER

LIFE has no honour to surpass the pride
Of the undaunted singer. When I feel
Love's rhythmic waves, that make my being reel,
Go royally and steadily as a bride
In measured march of song; when I confide
To all the world my secret soul's appeal —
Wound round with lyric veils that half reveal —
Then is my hour of living magnified.

Then do I hear strange voices answer me
Across the waiting silence. And I know,
Belovèd, that our yearning dreams shall flow
Into their dreams, as rivers find the sea,
And unborn lovers love more tenderly
Because we loved each other long ago.

THE EAGLES

O EAGLE mate of mine, the souls are few
That scale the height where we have made our nest
Above the perilous chasm! Breast to breast
We battle with the darkness, and the clue
To our far flight is written in the true
Eyes of the constellations. All unguessed
In the dull valley is the dizzy quest
That calls us to patrol the pathless blue.

The air is thin where we entice our brood
Of young to measure their frail wings with Fate;
But they are nourished on ethereal food,
Found only on these crags inviolate.
Facing the wind, the void, the solitude,
We are God's pioneers, O eagle mate!

THE TABERNACLE

WHEN from the cloud along the mountain height
The Lord decreed that thou, Love, shouldst be made,
Was not the mighty architect afraid,
And blinded by the vision and the light?
O covenantal ark of sacred rite,
Law-holding heart, with pure gold overlaid!
Between thy wingèd cherubim, love-rayed,
The Presence will commune with me this night.

For I have laved me at the outer gate;
Around my soul's blue robe the golden bells
And pomegranates are broidered, and I wait
The word of Him that in this temple dwells.
The Power descends, it permeates, compels;
And my soul testifies, "The Lord is great."

LOVE'S HUMBLeness

I know the pride of Love, the happiness
Of gratified possession, wearing high
Its diadem no envy can deny:
I know the power of the withheld caress
That leaves Love unsubdued, but weaponless;
I know Love's unveiled look that blinds the eye;
I know the splendid joys that magnify
Poets who Love's beatitudes express.

But till I learned Love's humbleness, I knew
Only Love's alphabet. 'Twas when I lay
A beggar at Love's knees the livelong day,
That I discerned this final master-clue:
'Tis better for a lover to bedew
Love's feet with tears, than walk earth's royal way.

LOVE'S BAPTISM

FROM the pure baptism of my love you rise
As a white saint dips in the sacred lake
And comes out shining. All your soul awake
Lives in your face, and would immortalise
One who revealed it in art's master guise
For all the world. Had life the power to make
Me such a painter! But my hand would shake,
For this is what you tell me with your eyes:—

I am your sea of healing, and the door
Whereby you enter God's abiding place;
Your trembling hopes are hidden in my hair;
I am your volume of unwritten lore;
My breasts for you are cups of cosmic grace,
My dreams the pillars of your house of prayer.

THE ICY PATH

THY soul and mine are walking warily
Along a line of ice, a narrow way
Between two seas of flame. The cruel day
We banish by closed eyelids, for to see
The cold white glitter were a mockery.
Should we unveil our eyes we could not stay
Upon the path; our steps would disobey;
Our souls would slip into the raging sea.

Love, how the warm waves woo our icy feet!
Our foreheads lifted for the polar wind
Are fanned by tropic airs . . . we lose our aim . . .
Dizzy and drunken in the swimming heat.
Swaying toward some lost wonder we must find,
We fall into the pulsing sea of flame.

A QUESTION

Is it thy body that I love — thy soul —
Or some mysterious dweller beyond both?
Alas, I do not know! But I am loath
To reckon as mere dust this aureole
My dreams have drawn about thee. Life's control
Drew from the earth the substance for Love's growth,
As for the lilies'; and Desire made oath
That Beauty's form should greet us at the goal.

But whether Love be blossom of the earth
Or of the spirit — let all question cease.
I only know my arid being's dearth
Grew roses in thy presence; that increase
Of vivid life came with our passion's birth,
And to my lips the rose-leaf lips of Peace.

THE RHYTHMIC HEART

With wonder-waiting breath and dream-closed eyes,
I listen to the far mysterious sound
Of your heart's tides, as some child who has found
A convoluted shell, and verifies
The story that the boundless ocean sighs
Within it for his ears; though all around
Are only waving trees and solid ground —
A prisoned memory there that never dies.

Your beating heart, Belovèd, holds for me
Such memories of the Ocean whence you came,
Washed up on Time's cold margin like a shell
Upon the earth-beach. All Eternity —
Yours and the world's and God's their Law proclaim
In the rhythmic ringing of this cosmic bell.

THE PRESENCE

YOUR presence is enough for happiness,
Without a word or pressure of the hand.
Near you the blossoms of my soul expand
Like lily buds at sunrise, that express
Their joy in fragrant silence. I possess
Your thought without a medium, and demand
Nothing of all Love's ministers that stand
Waiting beyond this bodiless caress.

Nay, do not touch me for a little while,
And speak no word, even of poetry.
Only the stillness of your lyric smile
Shall bear the message of your soul to me,
As through your misty eyes, blue mile on mile,
I sail on feeling's immaterial sea.

THE SPHERE OF LOVE

WHEN in the circle of my arms' embrace
Close I enfold you, I encompass, Dear,
The opulent earth, and whisper in its ear.
I look the soul of the planet in the face,
And feel against my cheek the winds of space
With every breath of yours. How can I fear
The need of aught? In Love's ideal sphere
Are hidden all life's lines of power and grace.

Beyond the self's dividual boundary
We touch that interspiritual goal
Where two in one dissolve in ecstasy,
Leaving a tracing on the terrene scroll
Of the fourth dimension of Love's mystic sea —
The metaphor, the poetry of the soul.

THE TOUCH OF BEAUTY

WHAT is that magical strange quality,
That gives to all the words and ways of you
Something supernal? Others are as true
Expressions of the inner thought, maybe;
But they are prose, and you are poetry.
You merely look at me — and something new
Calls me to give it form; some faint, far clue
Touches me from a world I cannot see.

And sometimes when the beauty is not so high
It overpowers me, I am moved to sing.
But, O Belovèd, how mere words belie
The wonder of that half-embodied thing!
It merely brushes me in going by,
But leaves me all alive and quivering.

THE UNASSUAGABLE

THE ache of unassuagable desire!

When my enraptured form is full of thee —
Drenched with thy love and broken utterly —
The spirit all thy power can never tire
Burns steadily, an unconsuming fire.

Oh, the long calling down eternity
Of the prisoned self that never can be free
Until its days of separateness expire!

Give me again thy lips, and let me lie
In listening silence on thy rhythmic heart.
The measures of that great musician's art
Entrance my soul — but cannot satisfy
Its thirst for unity. Oh, let me die,
And be of thy very self a throbbing part!

AT LOVE'S FEET

HERE where I lie a pilgrim at Love's feet,
Palm pressed to palm in pure humility,
Are many wonders they may never see
Whose brows challenge the morning. Strangely sweet
This realm where mastery and service meet,
Losing themselves in Love's immediacy.
Its guarded gate reveals that mystery
Reserved for those whose lesson is complete.

Here Pride and Passion yield their ancient power,
And Faith, twin-born with Knowledge, blends with him
In one clear revelation. Since man's eyes
Saw first in vision Love's rare mountain flower,
Some souls have sought it on the perilous rim
Of Self's cold avalanche — and grasped the prize.

FROM THE VOID

WHEN swimming in the sea of Love's embrace,
Under the rays of the meridian sun,
I hear a Voice in the void, and one by one
The veils of substance fall from off the face
Of my free spirit. In the urgent race
Toward the white shore where being is begun
In harmony supernal, I have won
From ravished Life the keys of time and space.

The Universe in semblance of man's form
Descends upon the waters, and I hold
Close to my heart the secret rarely told
Before to any mortal. Human-warm
And soft for me, this Presence I enfold
Can walk the sea and curb the will of the storm.

LOVE LIGHT

BELOVED, in those first remembered days
We smiled into Love's face, not questioning
His meaning, as gay children in the spring
Laugh in the face of joyous winds whose ways
They are too frail to follow. But the gaze
Of Love grew serious, discovering
A nascent, interspiritual thing —
Nameless on earth, that set our souls ablaze.

Have mortals ever seen the steady light
That now burns in Love's eyes? To me it seems
The answer to some question asked in dreams
And then forgotten. And it thrills my sight —
As if the sun, with flame-compelling streams,
Had hurled a new strange planet down the night.

THE RIVER

ALONG the woods and meadows of my days
The thought of thee majestically flows,
Like some great river that in gladness goes
Down to the ocean. All thy fertile ways
Are blossom-bordered, for in Love's warm rays
Each kiss of thine becomes a crimson rose
And every tear a lily, pure as those
White blooms that won the Galilean's praise.

Thou art the Nile and I am the land of Kem.
River of joy, making my arid years
A garden of sweet fragrance and of song!
Enriched by thee, my fields have made arrears
Of all neglected harvests, and a throng
Of labourers in due time shall garner them.

AT THE SUPREME HOUR

WHEN comes the supreme hour for me to die;
When, justified of life, I turn at last
To question the pale secret of the past
And to be one with it, O Love, that I
May have thy clinging lips to fortify
My spirit for the journey! I would cast
My soul upon thy kiss, as on some vast
And shoreless ocean refluxing with the sky.

And may this dual, intimate ecstasy
Be as my bark to venture the unknown.
Then to whatever region I am blown
By the death winds of evening, I shall be
Borne upon rapture — nevermore alone —
Though incorporeal, still one with thee.

THE OASIS

If I had not the patience of the earth,
That hour on hour develops the slow seed,
And age on age attains each racial deed,
I should despair of ever being worth
The wonder of your love. In Life's grey dearth,
My sun-scorched oasis bore scarce a weed.
Then you reclaimed me, and my spirit freed
From the arid liveness of untimely birth.

Your love is like spring-water, and has made
A greenness in my desert; 'tis the deep
Source of my hope's tall palm-trees, that withstand
Life's whirling winds and wild Saharian sand.
Your love is like the placid stars that keep
Vigil, that I may never be afraid.

THE THOUGHT OF THEE

SOMETIMES, Belovèd, the mere thought of thee
Is potent as a Kabalistic spell
To conjure up thy presence. I compel
The latent forms of air to rise and be
A body for my vision, fearlessly
Beckoning thy soul to enter. Then I tell
That wraith such wonders that the sentinel
Behind the doors of absence bends to me.

The thought of thee is poetry more pure
Than any that I lock in measured lines.
The thought of thee is light, that shall endure
Into the darkness when our day declines;
The thought of thee is prayer, that can allure
Angels to aid us in our love's designs.

LOVE'S IMMORTALITY

AMONG those things that make our love complete,
And high beyond all others I have known,
This knowledge is not least: That we have sown
Together seeds of beauty, that shall greet
Strange years in blossoms which the reckless feet
Of Death shall not destroy; that we have shown
To blinded eyes the visions of our own,
Making our blood in others' veins to beat.

Why should we yearn for immortality
In some imagined heaven, when on the earth
Our flowers of song perfume the dusty road,
And speak to passers by of you and me?
Enough that we have justified our birth,
Ere entering the inscrutable abode.

BEYOND THE DRAGON'S GATE

OF lesser loves I have known jealousy,
But of thy love, my comrade — nay, Ah, nay!
Our separate jealous selves are one to-day,
Absorbed and mingled in our unity.
In the dim future should it ever be
Some other love allured thee, I would say:
“The brother of my life, who is away
On his soul's business, will return to me,
Bringing new knowledge with him: so I wait.”
And though with pain my lonely lips were dry,
My learning soul would listen at the gate
That looks along life's road, for thy far cry
On the world's rim. Only we intimate
Of spirit know the meaning of that tie!

THE TIDES

THE daily hours my lover is away
Are like the long recession of the sea
Between the tides, but when he comes to me
The surf beats on the shore. This hour the grey
Sands are all dry far out, and rocks display
Their sinister faces, that I never see
Save when the ebb-tide's far uncertainty
Of absence makes a desert of the day.

But in the rushing joy of his return,
The menacing old rocks will bathe their faces,
And all their deep, hard lines will be no more;
The lonely sands of minutes that now yearn
To greet him will be lost in his embraces,
And loving waves will dance along the shore.

ATTAINMENT

To-DAY I pondered long on the rewards
That beckon man's endeavour: gold, and power,
And fame, and love, and pleasure's passing hour
Of sweet, that but a memory accords
Unto the future. And I asked the lords
Of my own stars what individual flower
Of consummation bloomed in my life's bower —
Was it the best the jealous world affords?

I thought of my songs, but their abiding worth
Is yet unproven in the court of Time;
Thought of the will whose sinews help me climb
The cliffs of Art — that was a gift of birth.
Then thought I of your love . . . my one sublime
Attainment in the dizzy round of earth.

TIPHERATH

WHEN I caress your dear face, lying so,
Beauty, the great Sephira, looks at me
With visible eyes; and though I cannot see
The border of his garment, yet I know
It sweeps the far horizon. Visions blow
Across my rapt brain, as ecstatically
The night winds move your hair, and poetry
Too high for comprehension here below.

You are, my Love, a medium in space
Eternal, through whom sovereign Beauty burns
To manifest. Winged with your love, I reach
A sphere beyond the scope of human speech;
And in the dark with you my soul discerns
Dimly God's unimaginable face.

THE ENTITY

LOVE, is it I, or thou? There seems to be
Only one soul here in the darkness now,
Only one body. Is it I, or thou?
Thy form is the extended boundary
That marks the dual consciousness of me.
I feel as mine the locks upon thy brow,
As mine thy long white feet. Oh, tell me how
Never to go outside the gates of thee!

Hid from the hollow world, I would remain
Within this lily garden of delight;
Would move not, sleep not through the long sweet
night.
I would forget that we were ever twain,
Forget that I shall find myself again
Standing alone in freedom's glaring light.

THE INSPIRER

WHEN words of mine are read in after days
By those unnumbered ones who slumber now
In that vast sea man's latent loves endow
With all-potential being, should their gaze
Turn wondering along Time's buried ways
To our dim day, my Love, questioning how
I wove this wreath of heart-songs for the brow
Of my strong mate, 'tis thou whom they should praise,
If praise be due. For I am but the lyre
Thy sure hand plays upon — thy master hand,
Whose touch allures the silence of desire
To mystic revelation, whose command
Rouses the spirits of creative fire
To utter speech that men may understand.

WHEN YOU ARE SAD

WHEN you are sad, Belovèd, my soul hears
The far-off sighing and unworded pain
Of all earth's buried lovers; the cold rain
Of all their lonely unremembered tears
Falls on my heart afresh. Ancestral fears,
Lurking among the shadows of my brain
Like ghosts among the living, weave a chain
Of immemorial omens down the years.

Your joy is of the hour, and pleasures me
Like sunshine and the spring; your smiles are flowers
That bloom in my life's meadows wild and sweet.
But in your sadness broods eternity,
Beyond the tides of æons and of hours . . .
I hear its music in your slow heartbeat.

THE LYRIC SEED

Love, you are full of songs and lyric seed
And wild harmonic measures, and your eyes
Teem with the forms my vision magnifies:
There the idea trembles toward the deed
As man trembles toward woman. I can read
In you the pass-word of the sphere that lies
Beyond us in the spiritual skies,
Waiting the world's indomitable need.

In you are words unknown in any tongue,
But potent are their meanings to inspire
My soul, love-quickenèd. Inarticulate
Ardours are there, and melodies unsung,
And poem-hopes; and Love's prophetic lyre
Shall give their voice authority with Fate.

IN THE STILLNESS

LAST night thy lips, Belovèd, on my face
Yearned in a soul-rapt stillness more intense
Than love's last passion; with such reverence
I feel that tenuous spirits must embrace,
Who meet each other in the shining space
Beyond the bourne. A fearless conference
Our souls held through the eyes, their mystic sense
Revealing, like a veil, unearthly grace.

To-day I wander in a world of dreams.
The throbbing of the city is to me
Far off and alien; and its murmur seems
Merged in the sounds of stars, whose light I see
At noonday, through a luminous air that teems
With forms of wonder and immensity.

THE REVELATION

SPIRIT whose graciousness reveals to me
Thy Self as the real presence in Love's eyes!
His form is Thine inviolable disguise
Of flame-wrought dust. Within that veil I see
The symbols of Thine ancient alchemy;
I see the hidden aim that sanctifies
To immortal use Love's burden of sad sighs,
And all his brief earth-born felicity.

And though continually I look behind
This mortal beauty for the deathless One —
That Substance of whose shadow is the sun,—
To Thine extended hand I had been blind,
Maybe forever, had Thy love not spun
This passionate web wherein I am entwined.

A DREAM OF DEATH

I DREAMED this midnight that my Love was dead;
And when I groping found again the place
Where I had left sleep's door ajar, his face
Shone pallid still against the wall of dread
Before me. And his voice in sorrow said:
"Seek me forever in the empty space
Beyond the moon, for I may not retrace
The road whereon I dropped Love's golden thread."

I cannot find in all the ways of night
One star to comfort me with promises
Even though unfulfilled, nor on the wind
A murmur of music. I am cold with fright,
Lest in the shadows and the silences
Seeking his form, I leave his soul behind.

THE ABIDING PEACE

Your love is like the brooding of warm wings,
And all the restfulness of night for me
When I am weariest; my troubles flee
Away like twilight ghosts when the moon flings
Her lovely glamour over earthly things.
You are the firmament of poetry
Above my soul, wherein continually
The passion-bird of Beauty soars and sings.

The shelter of your love is my release
From the world sorrow. On my lips you lay
The lyric spell whose word survives the day;
And in your arms is that abiding peace
Never to fail me should the star-dance cease,
And Time, the piper, claim his cosmic pay.

THE SOWER

THOU art a sower of that potent seed
Whose vital flower shall fructify the ages.
By thy strong sowing shall a thousand sages
Rise into being in the days of need
From the world's fertile soil. No noxious weed
Shall rob the weary husbandman of wages
On the fields thou hast sown, and God's own mages
Shall measure them the harvest by their need.

I am a field of thine; within my breast
The seeds of power are stirring in their sleep
Before the great awakening. Strange unrest
Rouses me ere the dawnlight walks the deep;
Then go I forth to toil, at Love's behest,
Tilling my field that all the world shall reap.

MASTER

ON my life's road there stands one shining day,
Lone and exalted above everything,—
The day my woman-spirit hailed you king,
Humble and proud, acknowledging your sway.
Though altars mark my sacrificial way
Across the world, yet to the gods I bring
Naught else like this: That round your knees I cling,
Whispering, "Master, speak, and I obey!"

In Love's rose garden is a hidden shrine,
A secret temple where high spirits meet;
The password is pure silence, and the sign
That gains the door — humility complete.
'Tis when my spirit touches the divine,
You feel my tears and kisses on your feet.

THE UNRECORDED

If any lover ever loved like you,
He did not love a poet; for I look
In vain for word of him in the slender book
Of woman-song. Your tender ways are new
In this untender world, and shining through
The meshes of your passion are the eyes
No mortal sees unveiled — the love-lit eyes
That wait the spirit in the fiery blue
Beyond life's shifting rainbow. In your face
The deathless Vision lures me — if I dare
To follow it across the void of space.
And yearning toward your beauty, unaware
My soul has found the one abiding place,
Beyond the goal of every lonely prayer.

THE CLUE

WHEN fused in your embrace my soul is free
With all mankind. Hidden away in you
Are unimagined vistas, and my clue
You are to that abiding Mystery
Behind all men and women. When for me
Your eyes are wet with Love's primeval dew,
I am the dream reflected; and I view
The vision of my self with ecstasy.

Within your soul the souls of myriads reach
Toward the obscure Beyond. You are the sire —
The all-potential father who shall teach
The gospel of attainment and desire.
Your torch shall light the future's signal fire,
And through your word the voiceless attain speech.

THE SUPREME GIFT

WHAT is the dearest gift thou bringest me
To prove thy love? Is it thy tenderness? —
The grandeur of thy passion? — thy caress? —
Thy soul that offers itself utterly?
These are great gifts, but not unique in thee.
Aye, though thy boons bestowed are numberless,
One passes all the others: I possess
Therein the life-pledge of our unity.

That pledge is understanding. In my eyes
Is written all my weakness, all my power,
And thou canst read the writing! Fear's disguise
Falls from our faces in the faith-lit bower
That shields our full revealing. We are wise
Beyond all isolate beings in that hour.

LOVE'S DAY AND NIGHT

THE darkness never gathers round my heart
When your eyes shine upon me; for my day
Is measured by your coming, and the grey
Chill twilight of the hour when you depart.
The sun-warmth of your smile makes love-buds start
All down my tree of life; and when we say
Love's litany, the winds from far away
Breathe us responses with heaven's lyric art.

And in the desolation of that night
When thou, my sun of life, art hid from me
By the dense world, I know thy loving light
Blazes around my orbit; though I see
Only that pallid and reflecting wight —
The unsubstantial moon of memory.

THE HIDDEN ONE

Love, in that labyrinthine house of thine,
Where does thy spirit hide? Long have I sought
Its door down all the corridors of thought,
In every impulse, every luring line
That is thy being; but the outer sign
Has veiled itself in beauty. Whence was brought
Thy mystic flame, wherein earth's dust was caught
And fused with love, reflecting the Divine?

Thou art all mine, in answer to my prayer:
Mine in thy purposes, thy faith, thy will;
My dreams of unity thou dost fulfil;
My secret seal is on thee everywhere.
Yet when I love thee most, I am aware
Of a strange something that eludes me still.

SPIRIT OF BEAUTY

SPIRIT of Beauty! Let me worship thee,
Robed in the form of my beloved one.
Thy look, that fires the fierce meridian sun,
Is too tremendous in its majesty
For mortal gaze to dare. Give me to see,
Over the eyes of Love, thy glamour spun
Of filaments of dreams that were begun
Before Orion rode in Gemini.

Spirit of Beauty, I had never known
Thy bodiless, immortal dwelling place,
Save for this lovely mortal shadow thrown
Upon the screen of time. And I can trace,
In every line of Love's illumined face,
The meaning and the wonder of thine own.

THE EMBLEM

IN worshipping my Love I worship Thee —
O Thou inscrutable Kindler of the sun!
He is the emblem of all things in one;
He is the medium of my unity
With Thine infinitude. There is for me,
Recorded in Love's eyes, all Thou hast done
Of wonder since the ages were begun
In sleep's undifferentiated sea.

My Lover is for me the Book of Prayer;
His every line is poetry profound
With esoteric meanings. In his hand
Are messages that Faith has written there;
And in the lessons his warm lips propound
Is all the wisdom I can understand.

THE GUARDIAN OF THE TEMPLE

GAZE in my eyes, deeper and still more deep!
Behind these windows dwells the soul of me
In solitude: enter thou there and be
The guardian of the temple. Thou shalt keep
The keys that open all the doors of sleep —
The mystic portals of that unity
In whose embrace I quiver with ecstasy,
Beyond the bourne of those who laugh and weep.

Cover me with the shadow of thy breath.
So blinding is the spiritual light
Of this high place, the moon looks white as Death,
And the stars hide them in the hair of Night.
O Love, thy lips! Between them quivereth
The very wing of God in earthward flight!

WOMAN-LOVE

THOU art the Unimaginable to me,
The Source that sends the sunshine and the spring
To bless my spirit. Gratefully I bring
My golden lily of life a gift to thee —
Fragrant with faith and immortality.
Make me the blossom of sweet offering
Upon the altar of thy ministering.
Only thy bonds can set my spirit free.

Yea, I will do all service that is meet
Unto the master from the neophyte —
Trim thy soul's lamp, and keep thy vesture white.
Thy mouth shall have the morsels that are sweet,
My mouth the bitter; and my only right
Shall be to bind the sandals on thy feet.

THE INNER LIGHT

SOMETIMES I see a light within your eyes,
Not of the earth, as if the hidden sun —
The vast pervading immaterial One —
Shone for a moment through its own disguise
Of planetary substance. Visions rise
In that divine candescence, visions spun
Of hoarded yearnings; 'twas their power which won
From the Invisible its guarded prize.

Love, in that light our guardian angels lean
So close to earth, almost their wings catch fire
In the upleaping flame of our desire
Each to the other. And this burning screen
Of mortal dust, that severs soul from soul,
Is known to the stars as Love's world-aureole.

THE PARADIGM

Now you and I indissolubly one,
Find in our unity the master clue
To the realm of dual spirits, all is new
For us in earth and heaven. We have spun
A web of dreams that reaches to the sun,
Yet stronger is than steel, Our hopes pursue
Even the reticent gods, that watch us through
Life's window with a smiling benison.

No longer can two souls that merely rhyme
Seem one to us, though joined with poetry.
Now we have found Love's secret paradigm
Which all men feel but know not, we shall be
A double mark upon the disc of time
That shall attract the eye of Eternity.

LOOKING UPWARD

My heart is sad and tremulous to-night,
Knowing my love less pure than it should be;
For shadow-thoughts of self persistently
Intrude between thine image and the light.
If anything be dearer in thy sight
Or higher than woman's love, ask it of me!
Silence, or sacrifice, or ecstasy
Of meditation's God-immediate height.

Is there some purer name than Love? If so,
It shall be thine, even in my secret prayer:
Brother, or Friend, or aught — I do not care,
So it be dear as that I would forego.
But I should call thee Love in dreams, I know,
And bear that memory of thee everywhere.

THE BROKEN PRAYER

Lost in Life's maze I seek that dreadful Throne
Where God's wise children breathe, Thy will be done!
But in between me and Faith's blazing sun
I see Love's eyes, and hear his broken moan,
"O leave me not, Belovèd!" Can I own
God's fragment dearer to me than the One,
Supreme, Eternal? 'Twas His hand that spun
This veil between the known and the unknown.

Fain would I tread that steep, immortal way —
And yet the arms of Love are yearning sweet!
My soul is tangled in the ropes of clay,
And passion's thorns have torn my faltering feet.
Unworthy am I, for I weep and say,
Thy will be done, O God — *but not to-day!*

THE OPENER

LOVE, you have opened many doors for me
To many mansions. You have held the gate
Of joy ajar, and when reluctant Fate
Clutched at my mantle, you have set me free.
You touched the fragile portal of poetry
And it sprang open, for my soul elate
To enter; then you led me to the great,
Stern, smiling, Janus-faced Philosophy.

But now it is the gate of Purgatory
You open for me; and my soul's desire
Goes on before us — not with tears and cries,
But gladly like the souls in Dante's story —
The saved souls that with joy embrace the fire
Which purges them for the heights of Paradise.

THE SACRIFICE

As thou wast consecrated ere we met
To sacred service on this orphaned earth,
And I, though loving, am of little worth
Against thine austere mission to be set;
I who have worn thy love an amulet
About my neck, mine by our stars of birth,
Now bid thee go — leaving my days a dearth;
Now pay the world my vast and sovereign debt.

There is a need of thee greater than mine,
O thou beloved ambassador of God!
With my heart's blood do thou thy vows re-sign;
While I walk back alone the road we trod
Together, and the trampling years, pain-shod,
Pursue me down the perilous incline.

THE VALLEY OF DISMAY

I CAME to-night along a lonely way,
Under a cold monotonous grey sky
That seeks no sunrise. Fallen rocks deny
My passage backward to the fading day;
Above my head the living trees decay;
And trailing passionate poison-ivies lie
Along the ground, reaching thin hands to tie
My footsteps in this valley of dismay.

Love, where art thou who yesterday held warm
My soul and body interblent with thee?
I call thy name — but only a wild swarm
Of demon echoes answer mockingly;
While down the gulf rides the dishevelled storm,
With some dumb awful message meant for me.

THE GREAT DARK

BELOVED, in the space that yearns between
Thy breast and mine these bitter separate days,
Are measured all the tortuous dim ways
Where sightless spirits wander — the dark screen
That hides from mortal sight the soul's demesne.
My path is lost in this bewildering maze
Of many windings. Taunting spectres craze
Me, mocking the caresses that have been.

Brave thou this dolorous region where I grope
Among the shades, and lead me toward the light.
Deny me love, but vesture me in white,
And gird about my waist the knotted rope
Of sacrifice. Then guide me toward some height
Too lofty for this aching human hope.

THE TITAN

I KNOW this Titan suffering was not laid
For nothing on my spirit, for I gain
By growing to the stature of my pain.
How else could God endure it — He who made
The pact of Fatherhood with me, and weighed
In His vast scales the hopes that I have slain
In saying, "Thy will be done"? Without His chain
Of worship round my soul, my heart, afraid,
Would stumble down the mountain of despair
And break upon the rocks. To little minds

God throws the crumbs of sorrow; but to me —
Why, He has seated me in His great chair
Beside the board of grief, and Himself grinds
And kneads and bakes the bread of cruelty!

THE WELL OF TEARS

WILL you, far off, weep too in that glad hour,
When I shall find the well of tears now hid
Deep in the rocks of pain? Will God forbid
Ever that I shall pluck the golden flower
Of peace upon its margin? I would dower
With all my song the meanest slave that bid
My lips to drink its waters, and be rid
Of this mad thirst that strangles all my power.

When I shall weep, Belovèd, the kind rain
Must cool your burning forehead that I see
Fire-circled in my dreams. I would not dare
To quaff a comfort that you might not share,
Though through the fierce noons of eternity
I stand with you on these red cliffs of pain.

WITHIN LOVE'S VEIL

O THOU whose hand has lifted high Thy veil
One blazing moment, that my Love and I
Might see Thy beauty, do not — or I die —
Leave me again in darkness! Should I fail
Of sovereign song, or prove too human-frail
Thy seer-inspiring boon to justify,
O let these tears, that choke my heart's love-cry,
Weigh but a little for me in Thy scale!

For I so long abode in the earth-shade,
That Thy refulgent beauty has blinded me,
And I am tremulous, and half afraid,
And cannot grasp the wonder that I see.
But I would die should the white vision fade,
Leaving me in the dark, bereft of Thee!

WITHDRAWN

SPIRIT of Wisdom, if Thy laws decree
That groping in the dark I must abide,
Why didst Thou draw Thy golden veil aside
One blazing moment that my soul might see
The splendour of Thy beauty? I would be
More fully blest — or rigorously denied!
The veil has fallen and the light has died,
But they have left great memories with me.

Spirit of Wisdom, are my upturned eyes
Too dull with weeping to reflect Thy face?
Has Love's consuming fever left a trace
Too much of earth about me? All that dies
With mortal breath my soul would sacrifice
To feel the flame of Thy supreme embrace!

THE EMPTY ROOM

ALONE I linger in Love's empty room
Where hope, desire and dream no longer dwell;
But memory stands, a pallid sentinel
Between the inner and the outer gloom.
The stars are weaving on Time's hidden loom
No rarer wonders than these walls might tell —
But will not! Love's dismantled citadel
Guards here the sacred silence of a tomb.

And when my spirit shall have gone away
In quest of Love where death and life confer,
The silence of my empty home of clay
Shall baffle every curious questioner,—
Even as this room, whose walls will not betray
Their knowledge of the secret things that were.

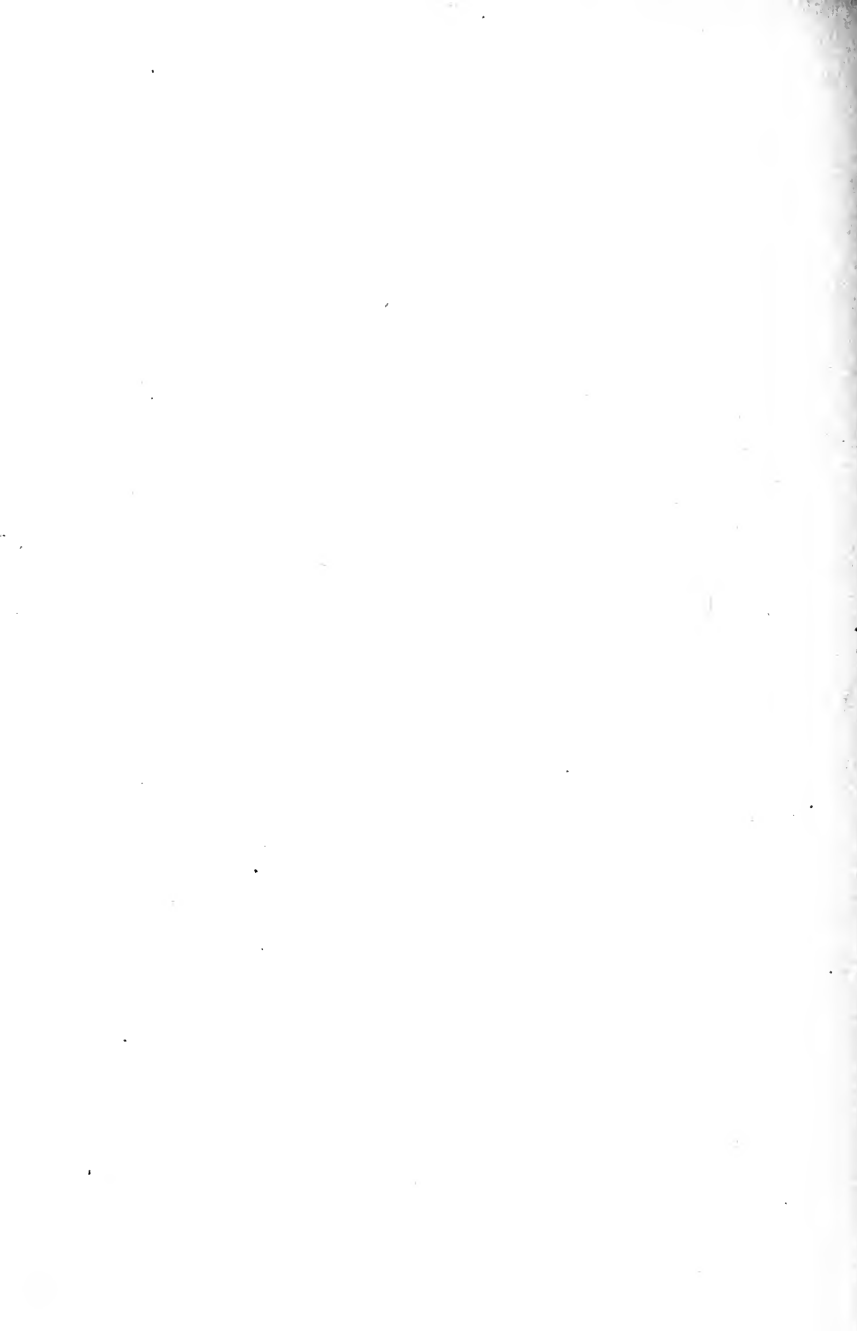
THE LOVE-SINGER

I sing of Love, dreaming the world may know
Something of that pure Beauty that I feel;
I sing of passion till the senses reel
With the full rhythmic volume and overflow
Of my own being; and then, soft and low,
I sing of mystic visions that reveal
God's mirrored eyes in Love's — His visible seal
Set in the dust for all who come and go.

But of Love's final secret, being wise
I do not sing,— Love's terrible demand
To lay his jewels for a sacrifice
Upon the Spirit's altar . . . Through the land
Should I go singing that, with unveiled eyes,
Hardly a soul would even understand!

NOTE

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